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Contemporary Buddhist Philosophy: A Bibliographical Essay

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I. Definition of Scope

This article focuses upon major works produced by Buddhists and/or scholars of Buddhism in the twentieth century. Some works mentioned are not on philosophy proper but on related fields, where reading is deemed essential background for philosophical understanding. There is thus an unavoidable interdisciplinary flavour to the article.

Some caveats are in order. There is a certain oddness involved in attempting to introduce Buddhist thought to Western philosophers at all, since the categories of Western philosophy do not closely mesh with those of Eastern philosophy. It should be recognised at the outset that from Asian perspectives it is somewhat artificial to pigeon-hole Buddhist philosophy in Western categories (such as branches of philosophy and schools of philosophy). It is, however, in the nature of reference works to use categories.

My justification of the major rubrics employed is in terms of ease of use for reference. Since the readership is, in this case, English-speaking philosophers and philosophy students, it is therefore appropriate to use categories convenient for them. This is a pragmatic strategy and carries no implication of cultural imperialism whatsoever. It would be entirely useless to use as rubrics categories unknown to the Western philosophers, no matter how internally faithful these are to Asian traditions from a contextual point of view. Consequently no apology is in order for the use of the categories which follow, just a word of caution that one must not confuse the finger pointing at the moon for the moon itself.

The specific task here is to elucidate those elements of contemporary Buddhist philosophy emergent from cultural contexts which are amenable to philosophical categorisation. To the extent that there has been a contemporary Buddhist philosophy across geographical lines in the twentieth century, that is due to the interaction of traditional Buddhist modes of thought with Western ones. Issues such as the environment, animal rights and feminism compete for space in the publisher's market of learned books and journals with more traditional topics such as the mind–body problem in philosophy and Buddhist–Christian dialogue. Neither the traditional nor the trendy can be ignored if one aspires to a holistic vision of contemporary Buddhist philosophy. Accordingly, some categories will be traditional ones while others will be topical issues.

In this article 'Contemporary' is construed as meaning 'twentieth-century', but for the most part in practice the focus is on materials published since 1945. Because of

restrictions on length I could not include everything possible, and sometimes have had to make potentially controversial judgments as to what materials to include. My criterion for selection is whether the entry is likely to be historically significant in the field of Buddhist studies when viewed from a philosophical perspective. Since others applying the same criterion may make different judgments, there is inevitably an element of subjectivity in the process of selection.

II. Buddhism and the Branches of Philosophy

Before treating more specialised works, it is worth noticing a few works of general interest. Textual and cultural background for the study of contemporary Buddhist philosophy is provided in W. T. De Bary, *Buddhist Tradition in India, China and Japan* (1969), in De Bary's *Sourcebooks*, in Edward Conze (Ed.), *Buddhist Thought in India* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1962), and in Conze *et al.* (Eds), *Buddhist Texts Through the Ages* (Boston: Shambala, 1990). Karl Potter, *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophy* is a monumental reference work in progress, which, along with G. P. Malalasekera's *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*, is of enduring significance.

A useful philosophical survey text for Chinese and Indian Buddhist thought is John Koller, *Oriental Philosophies* (New York: Scribners', 1970/1985). This work, together with Koller's *The Indian Way* (New York: Macmillan, 1982) and his *Sourcebook on Asian Philosophies* with Patricia Koller (New York: Macmillan, 1991) do nicely for general reference or for undergraduate study. A concise work on Japanese Buddhism as a possible supplement to Koller is Junjiro Takakusu (Ed. by Wing-tsit Chan and Charles A. Moore), *The Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1947). For a less schematic approach, one might consult Hajime Nakamura, *Ways of Thinking of Eastern Peoples* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1964). A valuable ten-volume series, *Classics of Modern Japanese Thought and Culture* includes Nakamura's *Ways* and Works by Yanagita, Tsuda, Watsuji, Hasegawa, Kato, Nakamura, Suzuki, Nishida, Muraoka and Hatano on Buddhism, Shinto, and Japanese thought (UNESCO and Greenwood Press, 1988). For basic Buddhism a good work is Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught* (New York: Grove Press, 1959/1974). An authoritative anthology with brief articles which can be easily combined with primary text readings is Charles S. Prebish, *Buddhism: A Modern Perspective* (University Park: Penn State, 1975). In Prebish is a piece by Roger Corless, 'Buddhism and the West', which includes a discussion of movements such as theosophy.

Other useful general works, but recommended specifically for *philosophically-oriented* study and reference, are Arthur L. Herman, *An Introduction to Buddhist Thought: A Philosophic History of Indian Buddhism* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1983), Troy Wilson Organ, *Western Approaches to Eastern Philosophy* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1975), Nolan Pliny Jacobson, *Buddhism: the Religion of Analysis* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1966; reprinted by SIU Press), David J. Kalupahana, *Buddhist Philosophy* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1976) and Frank J. Hoffman, *Rationality and Mind in Early Buddhism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987).

A. Buddhism and Logic

Logic is sometimes said to be the backbone of philosophy, but in Buddhist thought that

backbone is particularly supple. Especially in East Asian *Mahāyāna* one finds a tendency to inclusive patterns of thinking (both/and) rather than exclusive ones (either/or). Hosaku Matsuo, *The Logic of Unity* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987) brings this out well.

In the South Asian context it is instructive to read B. K. Matilal, *Perception* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); "too often the term 'Indian Philosophy' is identified with a subject that is presented as mystical and non-argumentative, that is at best poetic and at worst dogmatic. A corrective to this view is long overdue" (pp. 4–5). Indeed, a corrective to an overly general and stereotypical view of Eastern thought is found in this and other of Matilal's detailed and philosophically perspicuous works.

Another commonly found feature of logic in contemporary Buddhist thought is its close connection with ontology. Rather than understanding logic as only a matter of abstract problems connected with semantics and analytic truth, Buddhist logic is pragmatically grounded in a view of the way things are.

Since there is a long tradition of debate in Buddhist monasteries it is not surprising that Buddhist logic is fundamentally applied logic which makes a difference to how debates should be conducted. Although parallels to formal logical principles may be found, Buddhist logic is basically concerned with rules for discussion in order to determine what is true.

Sometimes mythological elements enter into discussions of Buddhist logic, as when it is said that a thunderbolt bearing *yakka* will shatter one's skull into a thousand pieces for a self-contradictory utterance—so greatly is logical consistency valued in Buddhist thought!

For a concise overview of the historical development of Indian logic see J. F. Staal, 'Logic, Indian' in Paul Edwards (Ed.) *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1975). Among masterful works in the field, those of Bimal K. Matilal and Karl Potter are of enduring significance.

B. K. Matilal, *Logic, Language and Reality: An Introduction to Indian Philosophical Studies* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1985) brilliantly combines a philosophical approach with philological exactitude. It focuses on logical, epistemological, ontological and soteriological problems in India and shows how "the study of the history of ancient philosophy can be combined with the first-hand study of philosophical problems and questions, to the advantage of progress in both enquiries" (p. 8).

Karl Potter, *Presuppositions of India's Philosophies* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963, reprinted by Greenwood 1972/75/77) is a solid, philosophically interesting work.

Ninian Smart, *Doctrine and Argument in Indian Philosophy* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1964) is a little classic, accessible to readers of various levels, even those without a knowledge of technical terms. It explores the religious determinants of metaphysical systems in India, including Buddhist metaphysics.

F. T. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic* Vols. I and II (New York: Dover, 1962 reprint of 1930 edition) is an important scholarly contribution to the field. Henry Nash Randle, *Fragments from Dinnaga* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, reprint 1981) makes a concise statement on Dinnaga's thought.

Hosaku Matsuo, *The Logic of Unity* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987) argues in favour of a view of logic as a unified cognitive process, mind as intuitive and holistic, the interrelatedness of metaphysics and epistemology, and the primacy of synthetic over analytic reasoning in philosophy. Drawing upon *Prajñāpar-*

āmitra tradition and emphasising the *śūnyata* ('emptiness') doctrine construed as the primordial source of creative potentiality rather than non-being, Matsuo challenges the familiar Western dichotomies of subject/object, mind/body, and internal world/external world. Although rooted in the Kyoto school, Matsuo also at once underscores the importance of Kant and a philosophy related to existence.

B. Madhyamaka Buddhist Logic

Important translations of Nagārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārika* have occurred in this century by Kenneth Inada (1970), Frederick Streng (1967) and David Kalupahana (1986). In addition, Kamaleswar Bhattacharya, *The Dialectical Method of Nagārjuna: Vigrahavyāvartani* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978/1976) should be mentioned. Malcolm David Eckel, *Jñanagarbha's Commentary of the Distinction Between the Two Truths* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987) is a valuable contribution to Madhyamaka philosophy, not just for its translation of an 8th century text but for its contemporary affirmation of the value of both philosophy and Buddhism thus: "Philosophy is so closely related to Buddhahood that even the tightest arguments bring to mind the powers and attainments of crowds of Buddhas and *bodhisattvas*" (p. 3).

Richard H. Robinson, *Early Madhyamika in India and China* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1978), is the author's University of London doctoral dissertation and a reprint of the University of Wisconsin 1967 edition of the same. It is a classic work on the subject. The philosophy of Kumarajīva, Hui-yuan, Seng-jui, and Seng-chao is explained in detail with reference to specific texts, and there is a useful comparative chapter.

T. R. V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1960) and Mervyn Sprung, *Lucid Exposition of the Middle Way* (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1979) are richly textured studies which repay careful reading.

C. Buddhism and Epistemology (Theory of Knowledge)

The Buddhist contemporary poet, Gary Snyder, composes 'Pine Tree Tops' in his poetry collection, *Turtle Island*, thus:

> in the blue night
> frost haze, the sky glows
> with the moon
> pine tree tops
> bend snow-blue, fade
> into sky, frost, starlight.
> the creak of boots.
> rabbit tracks, deer tracks
> what do we know.

For philosophers, however, epistemological implications of Buddhist thought are not far to seek, as the work of K. N. Jayatilleke admirably demonstrates. B. K. Matilal, D. J. Kalupahana, K. N. Upadhyaya and G. Dharmasiri have highlighted the importance of 'knowledge and vision' in Buddhist thought. Yet for all that Buddhist thought cannot be reduced to philosophy without religion, and *a fortiori* cannot be reduced to a single branch of philosophy such as epistemology.

B. K. Matilal, *Perception* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986) defends Nyāya-Vaisesika

realism as against Buddhist phenomenological idealism while giving a historical account of the two schools. He shows that Western philosophy and Indian philosophy have much in common on topics of perception, external world and criteria of human knowledge. Matilal's *Epistemology, Logic, Grammar in Indian Philosophical Analysis* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971) is also a valuable work to consult.

K. N. Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1963) has written the classic account of Buddhist epistemology from a Sri Lankan perspective. His opus is both finely detailed and philosophically interesting. Malcolm David Eckel, *Jñānagarbha's Commentary on the Distinction Between the Two Truths* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987) has produced a study of Jñānagarbha, a thinker in the 8th Century Svatāntrika branch of the Madhyamaka school, calling attention to experience and perception. Eckel emphasies the Indian rather than Tibetan material and attempts to capture Madhyamaka just as it was about to enter Tibetan culture. In so doing Eckel eniches the contemporary study of Buddhist thought through his mastery of the Sanskrit sources. For a Tibetan approach to Svatāntrika, one might well consult Donald S. Lopez, *A Study of Svatāntrika* (Ithaca: Snow Lion, 1987).

D. Buddhism and Ethics

It is sometimes said that not enough work has been done in Buddhist ethics. On the South Asian side Hammalawa Saddhatissa, *Buddhist Ethics* (Boston: Wisdom, 1987) and Winston L. King, *In the Hope of Nibbāna* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1964) are noteworthy, as on the East Asian side are Masao Abe's translation of Nishida, *The Study of Good* (New York: Yale University Press, 1990) and the previous translation by Valdo Viglielmo. Phillip Kapleau, *The Wheel of Life and Death: A Practical and Spiritual Guide* (New York: Doubleday, 1989) is an accessible work with chapters on such ethical topics as suicide and euthanasia.

The interface between practice and doctrine is an emphasis of the recent volume edited by David W. Chappell, *Buddhist and Taoist Practice in Medieval Chinese Society* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987) and in Stephen Teiser, *The Ghost Festival in Medieval China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

The practice of meditation is the backbone of Buddhist ethics. Amadeo Sole-Leris, *Tranquility and Insight* (London: Rider, 1986) provides a contemporary, useful general introduction. For a scholarly treatment, see Michael Carrithers, *The Forest Monks of Sri Lanka* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983). Other general works of interest on the practice of Buddhist meditation is Bhikkhu Buddhadasa, *Ānāpānasati (Mindfulness of Breathing)* (Bangkok: Sublime Life Mission, 1971/1976) and Bhikku Ñānamoli, *Mindfulness of Breathing (Ānāpānasti)* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1964). On the Mahāyāna side there is Minoru Kiyota, *Mahāyāna Buddhist Meditation: Theory and Practice* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1978). A Unitarian Christian critique which attempts to sort out the pros and cons of meditation practice is Douglas A. Fox, *Meditation and Reality: A Critical View* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1986).

1. Non-violence. Thomas Merton, *Gandhi on Non-Violence* (New York: New Directions, 1964/1965) is edited with an introduction by Merton and containing excerpts from Gandhi's work.

Glyn Richards, *The Philosophy of Gandhi* (London: Curzon Press, Barnes & Noble,

1982) is a fine book on Gandhi. Chris Chapple, *Karma* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1986) analyses Vedic, Epic, Hindu, and Buddhist *sūtra* literature, and emphasises action in the present that conditions the future. Decision making instead of destiny, and freedom instead of fate, predominate on Chapple's interpretation of *karma* ('action') in Buddhism.

A useful book on non-violence towards animals is Tom Regan (ed.) *Animal Sacrifices: Religious Perspectives on the Use of Animals in Science* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986).

A Vietnamese Buddhist monk of considerable popular influence is Thich Nat Hahn, author of several mainly aphoristic works such as *The Sun, My Heart* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1988). Although therein Hahn has a way of contrasting 'philosophy' with words which 'come from the depths of the soul' (p. 67) in a way somewhat similar to Miriam Levering, *Rethinking Scripture* (Albany: SUNY, 1990) with the emphasis on 'true words', his word does contain epistemological implications: "All is in the word 'known'. To know is to realize. Realization is mindfulness." (p. 133). Hahn is well-known for his activities as chairman of the Vietnamese Buddhist Peace delegation during the Vietnam war.

After studies at Cambridge (England) and Hawaii, P. D. Premasiri is working on the topic of Buddhist ethics and continues to teach at the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. Formerly from Sri Lanka, Bhikkhu Mahinda Deegalle of Chicago is author of *Nibbana and Morality* (in Sinhalese).

An important recent collection of papers is Charles Fu and Sandra Wawrytko (eds), *Buddhist Ethics and Modern Society* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991).

2. Environment. SUNY Press continues to be one of the leaders in producing books on Buddhism which relate to a contemporary audience. A good example is J. Baird Callicott and Roger T. Ames (Eds), *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought: Essays in Environmental Philosophy* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989). Buddhist ecological ethics are explored therein with papers by David J. Kalupahana, William R. Lafleur, Frank Cook, Kenneth Inada *et al.*

3. Gender issues. Robert Aitken, *The Mind of Clover* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984) writes: "My feeling is that with the encouragement of teacher and sangha, the individual member has a chance for personal realization through Zen practice, whether he or she is heterosexual or homosexual. Buddha nature is not either one and it is both.' (p. 42).

In 1977 judge King-Hamilton sentenced the poet, James Kirkup, for blasphemous libel in what became known as 'The *Gay News* Trial'. This provided the context for Bhikkhu Sangharakshita's pamphlet, *Buddhism and Blasphemy* (London: Windhorse Press, 1978). Subsequent philosophical discussion in journals has occurred in Frank J. Hoffman, 'Remarks on Blasphemy' (*Scottish Journal of Religious Studies*, 4 (2), 1983), Roy W. Perrett 'Blasphemy (*Sophia*, 26 (2), 1987) and Frank J. Hoffman, 'More on Blasphemy' (*Sophia*, 28 (2), 1989).

I. B. Horner, *Women Under Primitive Buddhism: Laywomen and Almswomen* (Flushing: Asia Book Corp., 1975) is a classic study of women in Theravāda. Diana Paul, *Women in Buddhism: Images of the Feminine in the Mahāyāna Tradition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979/1985), is an important contribution on

the Mahāyāna side. Wendy D. O'Flaherty, *Women, Androgenes, and Other Mythical Beasts* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980) is a "woman's view of a group of men's views about women" (p. x) focusing mainly on Hindu mythology but with some references to Buddhism throughout.

Also noteworthy is Ellen S. Sidor (Ed.), *A Gathering of Spirit: Women Teaching in American Buddhism* (Cumberland, RI: Primary Point Press, 1987). Deborah Hopkinson, Michele Hill, Eileen Kiera (Eds), *Not Mixing Up Buddhism* (Fredonia, NY: White Pine Press, 1986) offer a valuable collection of essays mainly by women writers (but including one by *Roshi* Robert Aitken). Important to those who, like Rita Gross, seek a synthesis of feminism and Buddhism is K. R. Norman's revised edition of C.A.F. Rhys David's *Therigatha* under the title of *Poems of Early Buddhist Nuns* (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1989).

4. Abortion. In his book, *Liquid Life,* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992) and in *Philosophy East & West* XL, 4, October 1990, William Lafleur explores both the ethics and the sociology of abortion in Japan. He calls attention to the Buddhist *mizu kuyo* (funeral rites for aborted foetuses) and to the curious role Buddhism came to play in a Japan where ritual purification in Shinto shunned death and funerals as polluting.

The Diamond Sangha, a Zen meditation group in Hawaii, have reproduced the text of their ceremony for the death of the unborn in Aitken's *Mind of Clover* mentioned above.

5. Equality. George P. Malalasekera (Ed.), *Buddhism and the Race Question* (Westport: Greenwood, 1978 reprint of 1958 edition) speaks to this important issue which divides Sinhalese from Tamils and blacks from whites. Sallie King, *Buddha Nature* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991) emphasises an important strand of Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy which leaves no room for racism of any kind. For if the 'Buddha nature' is inherent in all beings, then all beings are in one important sense equal.

6. Right livelihood. Uma Chakravarti, *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987) is worth consulting on the social and political context of early Buddhism, especially on the *gahapati* (householder). Although not itself a philosophical work, this book will provide useful information in understanding Buddhist ethics in the socio-political context.

Surely it is possible to be a householder and a Buddhist, but is it possible to be a Buddhist householder and a Christian at the same time? In *Genuine Fake* (London: Heinemann, 1986) Monica Furlong gently chides Alan Watts, saying of his episcopal ordination: "He did not, in fact, make any pretence of conversion, but such was the enthusiasm of the Christian clergy who encouraged him, or such was the unconscious arrogance in the church that all 'right-thinking' people are Christian at heart, that no difficulties at all were made about his proposal to take up paid employment in a religion no longer his own" (pp. 78–79).

Furlong's biography thus raises the question of the meaning of 'right livelihood' for Buddhistically inclined twentieth century people. Extrapolating from the thought of Wilfred Cantwell-Smith an interesting answer to the problem of authenticity raised by Furlong is possible. Making a distinction between the adjectival and the noun use of

religions (e.g. being a Christian person/being a Christian), it is possible for the same person to be both Christian and a Buddhist. Roger Taishi Corless also struggles with this issue in an interesting way, with the *cakra-crucifix* diagrams, towards a Buddhist–Christian synthesis. If moves such as Cantwell-Smith's and Corless' are apt, perhaps Furlong's criticism of Watts can be answered.

7. Ethics in Ritual Action. Richard Gombrich, *Precept and Practice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971) and his *Theravada Buddhism* (London: Routledge, 1988) are important sociological and doctrinal background materials for philosophical investigation of Buddhist ethics, especially in the Sri Lankan context. John Holt, *Disciplines: the Canonical Buddhism of the Vinayapitaka* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983) presents a careful study of *Vinaya*. Kenneth Wells, *Thai Buddhism: Its Rites and Activities* (Bangkok: Suriyabun Publishers, 1975) is an authoritative source for material on Thai Buddhist ceremonies. Although not on Buddhism *per se*, Peter Winch's article, 'Understanding a Primitive Society' (reprinted in *Ethics in Action*) can be a powerful stimulus in discussing the meaning of ritual actions in the Buddhist context.

E. Buddhism, Metaphysics and Ontology

A useful general introduction to metaphysical problems in Western philosophy is Brian Carr, *Metaphysics: An Introduction* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1987).

It is arguable that metaphysical presuppositions are inherent in world view formation, such that a sharp wedge between Buddhism of even the earliest sort and metaphysics cannot be validly drawn. The terms of a particular language demarcate the real from the unreal for a user of that language. On this view a metaphysical system is a working out of the implications of linguistic structures (e.g. the subject/object and substance/attribute distinctions). One may not care to construct a metaphysical system, but metaphysical implicatons cannot be absent from one's thought insofar as one employs language. For Buddhists, suffering is a real feature of existence.

But Nāgārjuna and some deconstructionists opt for a provisional use of language such that one is not led into metaphysical commitments at all. Even the Buddha's own language used to convey the *dharma* is sometimes characterised as provisional.

So there is controversy in interpreting whether, and if so how, metaphysics plays a role in Buddhism. Proponents of the thesis that Buddhism is a form of empiricism have often rejected the idea that metaphysics can be found in Buddhism. It may be more correct to say that it is speculation that is eschewed in Buddhism, rather than Buddhism holds no metaphysical implications, unless one is referring to a Buddhist thinker like Nāgārjuna.

There are two papers, 'The Buddhist Empiricism Thesis' and 'Buddhist Belief "In"', published in the 1980's by Frank J. Hoffman which relate to the above mentioned controversy and may be found in *Religious Studies* Vol. 18 no. 2, June 1982, and Vol. 21 no. 3, Sept. 1985.

Florin G. Sutton, *Existence and Gnosis in the Lankavatara Sutra: A Study in the Ontology and Epistemology of the Yogacara School of Mahāyāna Buddhism* (Albany): SUNY, 1990) is a work of interest on ontology. Of related interest is Bruce C. Hall's explanation of the nature of Vasubandhu's 'idealism' in such a way as to render the label moot in his *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* article (Vol. 9 no. 1, 1986).

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F. Buddhism and Philosophy of Religion

General works on philosophy and religion which include Buddhism are few and far between. Mention may be made of William H. Capitan, *Philosophy of Religion: An Introduction* (Indianapolis: Pegasus, 1972) as one of a very few philosophy of religion works with anything on Asia. John Hick, *Philosophy of Religion* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1990 4th ed.) addresses some topics relevant to a study of Buddhism and Asian thought. Co-edited with Paul Knitter, Hicks's *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1988) is well worth reading. For an interesting contrastive study see Paul J. Griffiths, *Christianity Through Non-Christian Eyes* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990).

1. Concepts of Issara (Creator God), Devas (gods), and Buddhas (enlightened ones). Gunapala Dharmasiri, *A Buddhist Critique of the Christian Concept of God* (Colombo: Lake House, 1974) shows in detail how and why Christian concepts of a Creator God have no application in early Buddhism.

B. M. Barua, *Studies in Buddhism* (Calcutta: Sarasvat Library, 1974) argued that "Buddhism is that form of *Bhāgavatism* which derives its traits from the contemplation of the attributes of Buddha as *Bhagavān*—a form of devotional faith" (p. 136). Sallie King, *Buddha Nature* (Albany: SUNY Press, forthcoming) and Paul Griffiths, 'Buddha and God: A Contrastive Study in Maximal Greatness; in *Journal of Religion* (Vol. 69, October 1989) also speak to the problem of interpreting Buddhahood.

Roger Corless and Paul Knitter (Eds), *Buddhist Emptiness and Christian Trinity* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1990) is a work of interest on an unusual juxtaposition of topics. Alice Getty, *The Gods of Northern Buddhism* (New York: Dover, 1988) explains the history and iconography of various sorts of Buddhas and deities, and may be useful background prior to consulting the former work.

2. Buddhist–Christian dialogue (East Asia). The Buddhist–Christian dialogue may be viewed as the greatest opportunity for Buddhists to discover more about their own positions since the days of the Silk Road trade. But since much of this dialogue is still emergent, it is difficult to map with any precision.

Hajime Nakamura, *Buddhism in Comparative Light* (Motilal, 1975/1986) is a comparative study of Buddhism and Christianity written by an eminent Japanese authority. Likewise, Chai-Shin Yu, *Early Buddhism and Christianity* (Motilal, 1981/1986) writes a Buddhist–Christian comparative work but with a Chinese emphasis.

As William Lafleur ably explains, the philosophy of Nishida Kitarō and that of the Kyoto School which he spawned came over the decades to be preoccupied with questions of the relationship between Buddhism and philosophical discourse. In the beginning, however, some of Nishida's students, such as (the Marxist) Tosaka Jun, had no interest in Buddhism. After Nishida's death in 1945 the Kyoto School was strongly influenced by existentialism, especially through the work of Nishitani and Hisamatsu Shin'ichi. For these thinkers one main problem was how to be religious without recourse to a deity, and Buddhist tradition was studied with a view to finding a solution within it. For example, Shin'ichi Hisamatsu's article, 'Characteristics of Oriental Nothingness; in *Philosophical Studies of Japan* (1960) is one such attempt. Another is represented by Watsuji Tetsuro, who followed his studies of Nietzsche and Kierkegaard with 'The Practical Philosophy of Early Buddhism' (*Genshi Bukkyo on*

Jissen Tetsugaku (1927, as yet untranslated) briefly discussed by Yuasa in *The Body* (p. 86).

The influence of analytic philosophy on contemporary Buddhist philosophy in Japan is minuscule compared to that of existentialism and German philosophy. Schopenhauer, for example, is much more important in Japanese philosophical circles than in Anglo-American ones. Their earlier and continuing affinity with German developments occupied the Japanese at a time when the analytic tradition was developing in the Anglo-American world. Also, the Kyoto school for the most part regards analytic philosophers as insufficiently attentive to the core problems of human existence, especially that of death. In addition, the massive amount of death and suffering at Hiroshima and Nagasaki could not be far from the minds of intellectuals in immediate post-World War II Japan. Instead of viewing analytic techniques as useful for clarifying problems in the philosophy of religion, Kyoto school thinkers tend to regard philosophical analysis as a distraction from more fundamental problems of human existence. Influenced by Martin Heidegger, Nishitani addresses himself to the problem of nihilism, arguing that the problem of modern nihilism is more easily dealt with by Buddhists than by Christians.

Just as they are comparatively unmoved by the niceties of analytic philosophy, so too the 'God is dead' movement is irrelevant to the Kyoto school. Both Keiji Nishitani and Watsuji Tetsuro (1889–1960) held that since the problem of the existence of God does not arise in Buddhism, the philosophical–cultural 'reaction' of the 'God is dead' movement is irrelevant in the Kyoto School context.

Zen and Western Thought (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985) by Masao Abe is a prize-winning work of interest to philosophers and religionists alike. The work articulates what it means to be a Buddhist philosopher in our time and illuminates some of the hidden presuppositions of Western tradition. Overall the emphasis is on our common humanity.

Winston L. King, *Death Was His Koan: the Samurai Zen of Suzuki Shosan* (Freemont: Asian Humanities Press, 1986) may be of some interest to Buddhist–Christian dialogians for its probing of the intellectual currents of Suzuki Shosan's attack on Christianity as an enemy of Buddhism and Japan.

3. Buddhist–Christian dialogue (South Asia). Donald Lopez and Steven Rockefeller (Eds) *The Christ and the Bodhisattva* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987) have compiled an anthology concerning what it is to belong and what it is to be open to the religious experience of others in Buddhist and Christian contexts.

Ninian Smart, *Concept and Empathy: Essays in the Study of Religion*, Ed. by Donald Wiebe (Albany: New York University Press, 1986). This collection of Ninian Smart's essays span two decades, and are set forth under three rubrics: philosophy and the study of religion, comparative study of religion, methodological issues in the study of religion. Also of interest under this rubric is Smart's *A Dialogue of Religions* (Westport: Greenwood, 1981).

An interesting form that Buddhist–Christian cooperation can take is that of joint translation projects. A noteworthy example is John Ross Carter and Mahinda Palihawadana (Eds) *The Dhammapada* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), a volume which makes use of the commentaries and is likely to be a standard translation for a long time.

Arthur L. Herman, *The Problem of Evil in Indian Thought* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976/1990) is worth consulting as an example of philosophically stimulating

work on parallel problems in East and West. A persistent inquirer who is inclined to probe in true Socratic fashion what many take as obvious, Herman is among the most daring and philosophical in his approach. His *An Introduction to Buddhist Thought: A Philosophical History of Indian Buddhism* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1983) is a useful textbook.

Lynn A. De Silva, *The Problem of the Self in Buddhism and Christianity* (Colombo: Study Centre for Religion and Society, 1975 and later reprinted with foreword by John Hick) does not believe that mind/body dualism is biblical, but instead that Buddhism's *anatta* and Christianity are compatible. They are even working on the same problem of understanding authentic selfhood, a problem which is supposed to be solved by understanding person-in-relation.

Overall, several thinkers who are philosophical theologians are also worth reading on Buddhist–Christian dialogue, such as Paul Knitter, David Tracy, Frank Reynolds, Roger Corless and John Hick. An important new work of interest in this vein is Frank Reynolds and David Tracy, *Myth and Philosophy (Toward a Comparative Philosophy of Religions)* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990).

4. Religious parallels between Buddhism and Hinduism. K. N. Upadhyaya, *Early Buddhism and the Bhagavadgita* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971) is a splendid work: detailed, scholarly, and meticulous.

G. Buddhism and Aesthetics

One of the best ways to cultivate an appreciation of Buddhism is by understanding Buddhist art and its interplay with nature. If the etymological meaning, *aesthetikos*, as a type of perception is emphasised rather than problems in analytic aesthetics, then aesthetics can provide a fruitful introduction to Buddhism. Exposure to images and patterns is essential. For a South Asian perspective Ananda K. Coomaraswamy in *The Dance of Shiva* (New York: Dover, 1985) provides a valuable point of departure, as does Kakuzo Okakura, *The Book of Tea* (New York: Dover, 1964) on the East Asian side. Philosophers interested in Asian aesthetics and Buddhism would do well to read Arthur Waley (tr.) *The Nō Plays of Japan* (New York: Grove Press, 1957) and savour the Buddhistic undercurrents.

Eliot Deutsch in *Comparative Aesthetics* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1975) has produced a philosophically interesting monograph which makes the problems of aesthetics emerge from a consideration of particular works of art. Hisamatsu Shin'ichi, *Zen and the Fine Arts* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1982) is also an important and accessible work on aesthetics.

William R. Lafleur, *The Karma of Words* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988) is a well-written work of special interest for its perspective on Japanese aesthetics.

Heinrich Dumoulin, *Zen Buddhism—A History: Japan* (New York: Macmillan, 1988–1990), translated by Gregory Alles and Paul Knitter, is a *magnum opus* likely to be a standard work for a long time.

Zen and religious thought is a topic which might be included either under aesthetics or under that of philosophy of religion. The following incomplete sampling are some representative authors worth consulting on Zen: Robert Aitken, Chung-yuan Chang,

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Thomas Cleary, Phillip Kapleau, Thomas Kasulis, Sunim Kusan, Robert Linssen, Katsuki Sekida, D. T. Suzuki, Philip B. Yampolsky and Alan W. Watts.

H. Buddhism and Philosophy of Mind

Here the work of Paul J. Griffiths looms large. His *On Being Mindless* (LaSalle, IL: Open Court, 1986) is a major contribution to the field, having as it does the twin virtues of Sanskritic detail and serious attention to philosophical arguments. A prolific writer, Griffiths is one of the very best of the younger generation of Buddhologists.

Steven Collins, *Selfless Persons* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) is an important study of Theravāda Buddhism from a perspective that will especially interest those trained in humanities or classics. A noteworthy feature of this work is attention to various kinds of imagery in Buddhist thought, such as vegetation imagery. In collaboration with some philosophers Collins has also produced *The Category of the Person* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

Jan Ergardt, *Man and His Destiny* (Leiden: Brill, 1986) offers a detailed study of *citta* ('mind') in early Buddhism. Lati Rinbochay (tr. and intr. by Elizabeth Napper), *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* (Ithaca: Snow Lion Press, 1980) presents a Tibetan perspective on the topic.

Yasuo Yuasa, *The Body: Toward an Eastern Mind-Body Theory* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987) is a detailed, philosophically interesting yet interdisciplinary study of mind/body. Continuing the tradition of Watsuji Tetsuro and in contradistinction to Western views such as that of Descartes, Yuasa emphasises that mind/body unity is an achievement rather than an essential given. In this he calls attention to the Japanese Buddhist concern with deepening integration between mind and body in contrast to the European concern with how this interaction takes place. Yuasa focuses upon variation in mind instead of on what the mind/body is essentially. The interface between science and religion is opened up in this comparative work, and attention is paid to Japanese thinkers such as Watsuji, Nishida, Dogen, and Kukai. Erudite and stimulating, Yuasa's work is worthy of careful consideration and the translators Thomas Kasulis and Shigenori Nagatomo are to be commended for introducing his work to the West.

Frank J. Hoffman, *Rationality and Mind in Early Buddhism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987) presents a synthesis of Pali Buddhism and contemporary philosophy. He argues against charges that early Buddhism is unintelligible and pessimistic. Mind plays a crucial role in early Buddhism, particularly in connection with the doctrine of rebirth, a view which fits snugly into the conception background of early Buddhism but which may be questioned by philosophically inclined outsiders. The thesis that Buddhism is a form of empiricism is rejected in favour of a view of meaning that does not require falsification. Eternal life is understood as 'not mortal' (*amata*), not limited by birth and death. Throughout, Hoffman advocates and exemplifies a philosophical approach to Pāli Buddhist texts.

David J. Kalupahana's *The Principles of Buddhist Psychology* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987), although more an outline than a comprehensive study of the topic, has been well received by some of the thinkers working on the interface between Buddhism and Pragmatism.

Nathan Katz (Ed.), *Buddhist and Western Psychology* (Boulder: Great Eastern Book Co., Prajna Press, 1983) is a work in which several of the contributors (e.g. Trungpa, Katz and Guenther) demonstrate awareness of the problem of reductionism, and some (Trungpa and Katz) point specifically to a problem of reducing Eastern thought to fit

Western categories. But reductionism can take various forms, and although it is dubious whether Buddhism can be reduced to any Western psychological or philosophical school without distortion, it is equally dubious whether Buddhism can be reduced to Western therapeutic training without remainder. One important question which this anthology gives rise to is: to what extent is a psychological interpretation of Buddhism in terms of Western categories possible, so that Buddhism is 'explained' without being 'explained away'? A reflective answer to this question would take into account that Buddhism is not merely a matter of technique, but a matter of religious and philosophical commitment as well.

I. Buddhism and Philosophy of Science

Ramakrishna Puligandla and Fritjof Capra, in South and East Asian contexts respectively, have called attention to the experientialist orientation of Asian philosophies and their affinity with physics. Whether, and if so in what sense, Asian philosophies may be rightly called 'empirical', however, is a moot question. Puligandla's *An Encounter With Awareness* (Boston: Theosophical Publishing House, 1981) and Capra's *The Tao of Physics: an exploration of the parallels between modern physics and Eastern mysticism* (Boulder: Shambala, 1983) are worth reading in this connection.

In the Japan of the early twentieth century, Inoue and Murakami (as mentioned above regarding Nakamura), worked reconciling karmic causality ideas with modern Western ones and comparing Buddhism (usually more closely with science) and Christianity.

J. Buddhism and Socio-political Thought

Buddhism has many faces, and sometimes presents an engaged philosophy of social action. Walpola Rahula, *The Heritage of the Bhikkhu* (New York: Grove Press, 1974) is a good example, as is Ken Jones, *The Social Face of Buddhism: An Approach to Political and Social Activism* (London: Wisdom, 1989).

Richard Gombrich, *Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1988) includes a chapter on 'Current trends, new problems'.

For a less academic but more trendy approach, with ecological and Buddhist overtones, consult Fritjof Capra, *Green Politics* (New York: Dutton, 1984).

III. Buddhism and the Schools of Philosophy

A. Analytic Philosophy

Comparisons between analytic philosophy and Buddhist thought often cut both ways. To be sure, Buddhist suspicion of substantialist sorts of metaphysics, God and soul, is in keeping with the tenor of mainstream twentieth century philosophy. Equally salient, however, is Buddhist commitment to a path of salvation, in contrast to mainstream twentieth century philosophy. Consequently it is sometimes erroneously thought that Western analytic philosophy and Asian philosophy are simply incommensurable, such that comparisons between them are jejune and unacceptable. The inadequacy of this

view was shown by Chris Gudmunsen, who produced a fine study of Russell and Abhidharma thought, *Wittgenstein and Buddhism* (London: Macmillan, 1977).

More recently Paul Griffiths, although working in theology departments, has called attention to the logic of the Buddhist tradition in such a way as to do a service to analytic philosophy in works such as *On Being Mindless* (Lasalle: Open Court, 1987). A prolific writer of detailed scholarly articles, he has recently produced (with John P. Keenan) *The Realm of Awakening: Chapter Ten of Asanga's Mahayanasamgraha* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

Stefan Anacker, *Seven Works of Vasubandhu, The Buddhist Psychological Doctor* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987) is a worthy addition to any Buddhist library. There is a section on logic, some criticisms of atomism, and many other points of interest to the analytically inclined philosopher. Together with T. A. Kochumuttom, *A Buddhist Doctrine of Experience* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989), which argues for similarity between *Yogacāra* metaphysics and early Buddhism, Anacker's work fills out our understanding of Vasubandhu considerably.

Nolan Pliny Jacobson, *Buddhism: The Religion of Analysis* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1966 reprinted by SIU Press 1970/1974) offers an introductory but useful perspective on basic Buddhism.

B. Pragmatism

As Kenneth K. Inada and Nolan P. Jacobson, *Buddhism and American Thinkers* (New York: SUNY Press, 1984.) show in their introduction, there is ample ground for discussion on the interface between Buddhology and philosophy by way of Alfred N. Whitehead and C. S. Pierce. Although the contributors to this anthology are virtually united in their rejection of substance/attribute metaphysics and subject/object epistemology, beyond this point each uses the occasion as a springboard for developing their own thoughts in diverse directions.

The volume contains essays by Charles Hartshorne, David Hall, Nolan Jacobson, Jay McDaniel, Kenneth Inada, David Miller, Richard Chi, Robert Neville and Hajime Nakamura. Their work is introduced by prefatory remarks and is unified at one sweep by a perspicuous panoramic introduction written by Inada and Jacobson. The prefatory remarks and introduction ensure a degree of coherence in what otherwise would have been a disjointed series of essays.

Also worth consulting is the somewhat more scholastic work by David J. Kalupahana *Principles of Buddhist Psychology* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1987).

C. Existentialism

With its emphasis on the anxiety of the human condition (compare and contrast with *dukkha* or suffering), the importance of choice, thrownness, *etc.* existentialism is a fertile ground for comparisons with Buddhist thought. Padmasiri De Silva is one of those to emphasise this point in *Tangles and Webs: Comparative Studies in Existentialism, Psychoanalysis and Buddhism* with a foreword by Ninian Smart (Colombo: Lake House, 1974/1976); also see Padmasiri De Silva, *Buddhist and Freudian Psychology* (Colombo: Lake House, 1973/1978).

Indeed, if Schopenhauer is an existentialist, then it is arguable that one of the

school's leading representatives is sympathetic to Buddhism. In this connection Bryan Magee, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983) and Bhikkhu Nanajivako's monograph, *Schopenhauer and Buddhism* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1970) are noteworthy.

Stephen Batchelor, *Alone With Others: An Existential Approach to Buddhism* (New York: Grove, 1983) is one of those rare works which attempt to bridge the gap between the *emic* or inside meaning of a tradition and its *etic* or external meaning to others. On this point it is an existential counterpart to the more analytic study of Buddhism by Frank J. Hoffman, *Rationality and Mind in Early Buddhism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1987). Batchelor writes within his own linguistic and cultural frame of reference to articulate his faith in Buddhism. Existential writers are referred to, but not as a matter of detached scholarly study.

In Japan the Kyoto School has emphasised comparisons between Buddhism and Existentialism. (See *Buddhist–Christian Dialogue (East Asia)* above and *Japan* below.)

D. Phenomenology

Ramakrishna Puligandla has emphasised the use of the term 'phenomenology' in application to Buddhist and Hindu thought and experience. His work, *Jnana-yoga* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1985) shows the application of phenomenology to 'the way of knowledge' in Hinduism, but *mutatis mutandis* some of what he says there may be applied to Buddhism as well. Puligandla, *An Encounter with Awareness* (Boston: Theosophical Publishing House, 1981) is a blistering attack on what he regards as the sterility and inanity of contemporary Anglo-American analytic philosophy. Puligandla argues for a view of the self (not soul or ego) as awareness, opposes reductionism, and favours a view of philosophy as concerned with understanding the nature of man and world. Puligandla's philosophical approach throughout is admirable.

A recent book of considerable interest to those who, like Puligandla, favour a phenomenological orientation to Buddhism is David Loy, *Nonduality* (New Haven: Yale, 1989). Loy advocates the thesis that there is a 'core theory' underlying Asian views.

David Edward Shaner, *The Bodymind Experience in Japanese Buddhism* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1985) drives the thesis that Western phenomenological method is useful for explaining the structure of mind/body experience, and that mind/body experience is a central theme for understanding Kukai and Dōgen.

Anagarika Govinda, *The Psychological Attitude of Early Buddhist Philosophy* (Delhi: Nag, 1975 reprint) takes a phenomenological approach in saying: "The only world of which the Buddhist speaks is one conscious universe which can be experienced in the microcosms of the human mind and which is represented by the various stages of life and realized by innumerable kinds of living beings" (p. 245).

J. F. Staal, *Exploring Mysticism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975) is something of a 1970s classic with Staal as guru. The work is a lively, provocative one which defends meditative mysticism against charges of irrationality.

E. Deconstruction and Hermeneutics

The recent trend in Western philosophy called 'deconstruction' also appears to have some parallels in Asian philosophy. Nāgārjuna, for example, may be regarded as offering a deconstruction of standard Buddhist doctrines while nevertheless saluting

the Buddha. Through the efforts of Western scholars such as W. LaFleur one hears of Japanese works in a deconstructionist vein, such as Nakamura Yujiro, *Nishida Tetsugaku no Datsukochiku* ('Deconstructing Nishida's Philosophy'). Under this rubric one also finds Tanabe Hajime, *Philosophy as Melanoetics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

An interest in 'hermeneutics', variously interpreted, occurs in recent works such as Donald S. Lopez (Ed.), *Buddhist Hermeneutics* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988) and Jeffrey Timm (Ed.), *Traditional Hermeneutics* (Albany: SUNY Press, forthcoming).

Branches of Buddhism may be more or less amenable to categorisation as deconstructionist, and one should be wary of overgeneralising and mindful of definitional issues in this regard.

F. Comparative Philosophy

'Comparative Philosophy' is a label for a very loosely unified movement of philosophers who regard attention to Oriental thought as significant for their philosophical work. Many are members of the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy, begun by Charles A. Moore, author of *Philosophy: East and West* (Salem: Ayer Co. Pubs., 1944); *Philosophy and Culture, East & West: East-West Philosophy in Practical Perspective* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1962) and other works.

At the University of Hawaii just after World War II Moore and others did a great deal to stimulate interest in comparative philosophy. Concentrating on East Asia, Moore's edited works, *Chinese Mind* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1967) and *Japanese Mind* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1967), show the sympathetic treatment of Oriental thought characteristic of the opening phase of comparative philosophy.

Nowadays it is difficult to generalise accurately about comparative philosophy, and there are various kinds of cases including the following. Some of these philosophers believe that there are philosophical problems which are 'the same' or at least 'similar' when East and West meet and that the main job of philosophy is to focus on philosophical problems; others are interested in a 'descriptive science' of philosophy which would be incomplete without the inclusion of Asian material. Some have an agenda (hidden or not) of championing what they regard as the superiority of selected Asian thinkers or traditions; others have no such *a priori* agenda (although in practice it often turns out in their work that Asian thinkers or traditions are vindicated in the face of criticism). Some take an ontological approach and suffuse their philosophising with religious overtones; others take the logician's approach and let the chips fall where they may. With such plurality even within 'comparative philosophy', the term is probably more useful to library cataloguers than to philosophers themselves. In this article its importance is that Buddhism is often treated by philosophers who consider themselves comparativists.

Paul Masson-Oursel, *Comparative Philosophy* (London: Kegan Paul, 1926) has numerous references to Buddhism throughout his work. His favoured approach is 'positivity in philosophy' with special emphasis on logic, metaphysics and psychology which works towards the goal of scientific progress and an appreciation of the history of ideas.

P. T. Raju in several works champions the comparative approach. *Introduction to Comparative Philosophy* (Carbondale: SIU Press, 1970), *Spirit, Being and Self: Studies in Indian and Western Philosophy* (Columbia: South Asia Books, 1986 reprint of the 1982 Asia Book Corp. edition), *The Philosophical Traditions of India* (London: Allen

& Unwin, 1971) and *Structural Depths of Indian Thought* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1985).

Raju's *Philosophical Traditions* has a chapter on 'The Heterodox Tradition of Buddhism', which nomenclature (although traditional) reveals an ambivalent tendency of many contemporary Indian philosophers to at once accommodate Buddhism and yet to set it off to one side. Their influence even filters down to some non-Indian interpreters of Buddhism who indulge in all sorts of intellectual acrobatics to find 'divine revelation' and 'true self' in early Indian Buddhism.

Raju's *Structural Depths* has a chapter on Buddhism emphasising the continuity of Buddhism within the Indian tradition such that "if the *Ajīvikas* and *Carvakas* can be Hindus, there is every justification to call Jainism and Buddhism forms of Hinduism" (p. 147). Regardless of whether one thinks that this is the point of elasticity where the term 'Hinduism' snaps, Raju's text is a useful course textbook with many interesting details for specialist and student alike.

Eliot Deutsch, *Studies in Comparative Aesthetics* (Honolulu: Hawaii, 1975) has tangential value for understanding contemporary Buddhist thought in his treatment of Zeami's views on Buddhist-suffused *Noh* drama. In three essays on three traditions (Indian, Chinese and Japanese) Deutsch exemplifies a problem-oriented approach which appeals to many contemporary philosophers.

Charlene McDermott (Ed.) *Comparative Philosophy* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1983) presents a valuable collection of essays on epistemology and metaphysics. The work provides stimulating juxtapositions of Eastern and Western thinkers selected with an eye for contemporary philosophical issues.

Nolan Pliny Jacobson, *Buddhism: The Religion of Analysis* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1966 reprinted by SIU Press) has much sensitive comparison and is replete with references to Western philosophers such as David Hume and Ludwig Wittgenstein. This accomplishment is arguably not surpassed by Jacobson's later publications, *The Heart of Buddhist Philosophy* (Carbondale: SIU Press, 1988), *Understanding Buddhism* (Carbondale: SIU Press, 1985) and *Buddhism and the Contemporary World: Change and Self-correction* (Carbondale: SIU Press, 1982).

Jacobson's co-edited volume with Kenneth K. Inada, *Buddhism and American Thinkers* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1984) is a valuable contribution to comparative philosophy on the contemporary scene. It includes essays from leading comparativists, such as Hajime Nakamura.

Archie Bahm, *Comparative Philosophy* (Albuquerque: World Books, 1978) and, in Korea, his associate, Min-hong Choi, *Comparative Philosophy: Western and Korean Philosophies Compared* (Seoul: Seong Moon Sa, 1980) may also be mentioned in this connection. In true East Asian fashion, Choi asserts: "The ultimate objective of comparative studies, not only in philosophy, but also in all other fields of scholarship, lies in harmony" (p. 98).

The several works of Arthur Herman, John Koller and Ramakrishna Puligandla indicate that comparative philosophy is flourishing today.

IV. Buddhist Philosophy in Culture: Works Written from a Cultural Perspective but with some Philosophical Interest

A. Mainland China and Taiwan

Chung-yuan Chang, *Creativity and Taoism* (New York: Harper 1971), *Original Teachings of Ch'an Buddhism* (New York: Grove Press, 1969) and *Tao: A New Way of*

Thinking (New York: Harper, 1977) was one of the twentieth century's great masters of interpreting Taoism and Zen (within which matrices he found many affinities) for the West. He stimulated special interest in comparative philosophy by way of Heidegger and Taoism in his translation and commentary on the *Tao Te Ching*.

Robert M. Gimello and Peter Gregory, *Studies in Ch'an and Hua-yen* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press with Kuroda Institute, 1983) has papers by Jeffrey Broughton, Luis O. Gomez, John R. McRae, Peter N. Gregory and Robert M. Gimello. In the Preface Gimello observes that Buddhist scholars "are now less inclined than they once were to abstract their subject from its various, complex, and everchanging cultural contexts. They are as much interested in exploring the web of its relationships with other components of East Asian civilization as they are in tracing the intricacies of its philology and the internal patterns of its thought" (pp. ix–x).

Thome Fang, *The Chinese View of Life* (Taiwan: Linking Publishing Co., 1980) and his *Creativity in Man and Nature* (Taiwan: Linking Publishing Co., 1980) are sparking renewed interest in the 1990s thanks to the efforts of George Sun, editor of the journal *Comprehensive Harmony*, an international and interdisciplinary journal encompassing many horizons but formed in honour of Thome Fang.

Fung Yu-lan, *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy* (New York: Free Press, 1966) and *History of Chinese Philosophy*, two vols. tr. Derke Bodde (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1952-53) produced valuable material for those interested in the history of philosophy.

Works of interest under this rubric are A. C. Graham, *Disputers of the Tao* (LaSalle, IL: Open Court, 1989), his *Studies in Chinese Philosophy and Philosophical Literature* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1990) and Arthur F. Wright, *Studies in Chinese Buddhism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

B. India and Tibet

Karl Potter, *Guide to Indian Philosophy* (New York: G. K. Hall & Co., 1988) is an excellent annotated bibliography and research tool. It would be foolhardy to attempt to chop wood for the master woodchopper, and so the reader is referred to Potter.

Under this rubric it is sufficient to emphasise a few works of special interest not included in the above discussion of branches and schools: Agehananda Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition* (new version to be issued as *Tantric Traditions*) Herbert V. Guenther, Buddhist Philosophy In Theory and Practice (Boulder and London: Shambala, 1976), Edward Conze, *Buddhist Thought in India* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1962 reprinted by University of Michigan, 1967) and Yoshinori Takeuchi, tr. and ed. by James W. Heisig, *The Heart of Buddhism: In Search of the Timeless Spirit of Primitive Buddhism* (New York: Crossroad, 1983).

A work that has been awaited with interest is Hirakawa Akira, *A History of Indian Buddhism: From Sakyamuni to Nagarjuna* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990).

C. Japan

Almost by default, the Japanese have been much more enterprising in working in cross-cultural philosophy than either the Koreans or the Chinese. Even D. T. Suzuki,

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who is not usually thought of as a comparative philosopher but as a Zen man, has a comparative essay on Meister Eckhart in *On Indian Mahayana Buddhism* (New York: Harper, 1968). For basic reference on Japanese Buddhism, see Alicia and Daigan Matsunaga, *Foundations of Japanese Buddhism*, Vols. I and II. (Los Angeles and Tokyo: Buddhist Books International, 1976).

Hajime Nakamura, in *Kindai Nihon Tetsugaku Shisoka Jiten*, has dictionary entries on both Enryo Inoue (1858–1919) and Sensho Murakami (1851–1929). These pioneering figures in early twentieth-century Japan attempt to defend Buddhism in view of the impact of Western philosophy. For instance, the topic of *Karma* was taken up by these thinkers in its relation to Western ideas of causality. (For additional details and translations see Kathleen Staggs' articles in *Monumenta Nipponica*.)

Masao Abe, *Zen and Western Thought* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), deals with Western thinkers such as Nietzsche and Tillich while relating his thought to the main trends in interpreting religion and science in culture. Throughout the Zen perspective is evident.

William Lafleur (Ed.) *Dōgen Studies* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985) includes interesting essays by Kasulis, Abe, Maraldo, Lafleur *et al.* The introductory essay by Lafleur is presented in dialogue form, and adroitly reveals the interplay of diverse disciplinary perspectives on the Buddhist hermeneutical front.

T. P. Kasulis, *Zen Action/Zen Person* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1981) is a philosophically worthwhile work which makes the philosophical problems emerge from considerations of Japanese language.

In addition to works of direct philosophical interest, there are also contemporary translations with commentaries which serve as useful background material for philosophical reflection about Japan. Noteable among them are Phillip Yampolsky (Ed.) *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967); Yampolsky's *The Zen Master Hakuin: Selected Writings* (New York: Columbia, 1971) and Yoshito Hakeda, *Kukai: Major Works* (New York: Columbia, 1972).

Chikao Fujisawa, *Zen and Shinto: the Story of Japanese Philosophy* (Westport: Greenwood, 1971), a New York reprint of the Philosophical Library edition of 1959, is a philosophical work from a Neo-Shinto perspective. The author attempts a dialectical synthesis of capitalism and communism, which in view of *perestroika* makes it surprisingly up-to-date, and offers an interpretation of Zen emphasizing Shinto roots.

D. Korea

As with Japan and China, it is difficult to pinpoint major works produced by Korean Buddhists or scholars of Korean Buddhism that have direct connections to the branches or schools of Western philosophy (e.g. typically, a single East-Asian work spans several branches and represents a perspective not already contained within any Western school).

Notice should be taken of Hee-sung Keel, *Chinul* (Seoul: Pojinjae, Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series, 1984), Robert E. Buswell, *The Korean Approach to Zen: The Collected Works of Chinul* (University of Hawaii Press, 1983) and Sung Bae Park, *Buddhist Faith and Sudden Enlightenment* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1983). Also noteworthy is Mu Soeng Sunim, *Thousand Peaks: Korean Zen— Tradition and Teachers* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1987). In Korea, two publications of special note are International Cultural Foundation, *Buddhist Culture in Korea*, Korean Culture Series Vol. 3 (Seoul: Si-sa-yong-o-sa Publishers, 1982), a collection of essays

by Korean scholars on Buddhist thought and art, and Sun Keun Lee and Ki Yong Rhi, *Buddhism and the Modern World* (Seoul: Dongguk University, 1976). In recent years the International Cultural Society of Korea (Seoul) deserves mention for stimulating the interest of foreign scholars in studying Korean Buddhism and culture.

Works of interest to Korean Buddhist specialists are Robert E. Buswell (Ed.), *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990) and Lewis Lancaster, *Assimilation of Buddhism in Korea* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1991).

In contemporary Buddhist thought there are many currents which are not in mainstream academic philosophy but are nevertheless influential. One thinks, for example, of the Chinese businessman C. T. Shen's *Mayflower II* (Institute for the Advanced Study of World Religions, 1982), of the Japanese Gyomay M. Kubose's *The Center Within* (Heian International, 1986), of the Vietnamese Thich Nhat Hahn's *The Sun, My Heart* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1988), of Thomas Merton's *Zen and the Birds of Appetite* (New York: New Directions, 1968) and of the American *Roshi* Aitken's *Mind of Clover* (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984). There is no space for listing all their publications in detail or those of others (including the Buddhistic poetry of Gary Snyder) who are worthy of mention.

V. Contemporary Buddhist Philosophy in the 1990s and Beyond

In an entry of this kind the reader may justifiably hope for some sense of 'what's happening now'. Even as this sentence is typed the 'now' recedes into the past and the present slides onward towards the 1992 publication date. I will venture a few remarks without the aid of any New Age crystal ball.

First, economically, one notices a movement of research, grants, and grant-related activities towards, on the one hand, East Asia (especially Japan) and on the other hand towards Tibet. Even scholars with training in South Asia appear to be shifting somewhat to accommodate East Asian *Mahāyāna* perspectives on their work. And then there are the many untranslated Tibetan manuscripts (in the Harvard Yen-Ching Institute, for example). There are doubtless political and economic realities behind these current emphases.

Second, socially viewed, there is the rise of numerous meditation institutes such as are listed in the useful reference work by Don Morreale, *Buddhist America: Centers, Retreats, Practices* (Santa Fe: John Muir, 1988) and also in the *International Buddhist Directory* (Wisdom, 1985). Rick Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America* (Boston and London: Shambala, 1986) tells how the lotus unfolds.

There is even the rise of a new type of meta-level institute exemplified by the Buddhist leader, Havanpola Ratanasara, who organises Buddhists from several cultures in his work in Los Angeles through programmes of the College of Buddhist Studies, and is active in dialogue with other religions as well. Buddhist groups in the USA easily become isolated linguistic and cultural enclaves. Yet some have seen the need to increase co-operation between these enclaves and between Buddhists altogether and the mainstream (predominantly Christian) culture. Whereas Ratanasara's enterprise would be a difficult undertaking in any specific Asian country, Western countries such as the USA are in good positions to facilitate the emergence of these meta-institutes which transcend ethnic enclaves, oppose cultural tribalism, and make for mutual understanding among Buddhists in the contemporary world.

As for social and academic opportunities, the meeting of college professors through those of the *National Endowment for the Humanities* Summer Institutes and Summer

Seminars which pertain to Asia function effectively to promote knowledge of Asian culture, of which Buddhism is one element. Also, The *Summer Seminars on the Sutras* (sponsored by *Jemez Bodhi Mandala*, New Mexico) which combine meditation practice with scholarly endeavour are another important contemporary social development nowadays. Credit should be given to the *Kuroda Institute* for extending substantial scholarly support for publications.

Third, politically, there is the development of political activism which is explicitly Buddhistic in its vegetarian, feminist, animal rights orientation in ways that cut across sectarian lines. Directories such as those mentioned above facilitate contacts among those interested in Buddhism.

Fourth, internationally, the events contributing towards a more unified European alliance and those which conditioned the decline in the heretofore monolithic Soviet domination of minorities together set the stage for the emergence of more East European publications sympathetic to Buddhistic thinking, such as Yugoslavia's *Kulture Istoka* or 'Eastern Culture' quarterly edited by Dusan Paijin in Novi Beograd.

Fifth, is the development of communications media such as computer networks, the use of computers for day-to-day on-line communications and text transmission work (such as the Columbia University Pali Canon CD ROM Project with Berkeley's Lewis Lancaster *et al.*). Various newsletters, such as *Southern Dharma* (Hot Springs, NC) and *Dharma Voice* (Los Angeles, CA) facilitate communication for the meditation minded.

Factors such as the foregoing contribute towards a concrescence of Buddhistic feeling, what Nolan Pliny Jacobson called "thinking from the soft underside of the mind". One result might be a sympathetic attunement among Buddhist groups such that they seek points of cooperation where there are sectarian divisions, such that they work better together for a world of cooperation and religious freedom.

The construction of a deep theoretical basis for Buddhist ethics taking into account the work of Saddhatissa and others which provides a unifying framework of intra-Buddhistic cooperation is a *desideratum*. Another challenging task would be the construction of a 'Philosophy of Buddhist Religion' (distinct from both the entirely *emic* (or internal) 'Buddhist Philosophy' and the entirely *etic* (or external) 'Philosophy of Christian Religion') which would highlight conceptual problems of interest specifically to philosophers.

Emma McCloy Layman, *Buddhism in America* (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1976), drawing on terms from Donald Swearer, writes of the possible modes of Buddhist influence as those of 'appropriation', 'transformation' and 'dialogue'. As Buddhism becomes more and more an established religion in Western countries there will probably be more instances of transformation and not just instances of Buddhist-Christian dialogue.

For further reading about the future one might consult S. S. Rama Rao Pappu and Ramakrishna Puligandla (eds.) *Indian Philosophy Past & Future* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1982).

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The Central Philosophy of Ancient India

CHR. LINDTNER

Introduction

When speaking of Indian philosophy we are, more often than we are perhaps clearly aware, dealing with matters that are more or less directly related to systematic yoga. I am here using the term 'yoga' in the sense of Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* (YS), as *citta-vṛtti-nirodhaḥ*, (1.2), the extinction, restraint of [all normal] activities of our mind. [1] These activities, according to Patañjali, are: *pramāṇa, viparyaya, vikalpa, nidrā* and *smṛti* (YS 1.6). They can be stopped by means of *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya* (YS 1.12), or by *īśvarapraṇidhāna* (YS 1.23), devotion to God. The purpose of one's efforts is to achieve a state of *samādhi* where the soul rests blissfully in its original nature—*tadā draṣṭuḥ svarūpe 'vasthānam* (YS 1.3).

What Patañjali presents us with is an elaborate and fairly late systematic and syncretistic form of yoga. Omitting all the details we can say that there are three main aspects of this system of yoga: 1) the normal activities of mind, *cittavṛtti*, 2) the way to stop these, their *nirodha* (viz. *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya*), and 3) the result of this struggle (viz. *nirodha, samādhi*, etc.).

This 'model' can, *mutatis mutandis*, be found in virtually all Indian philosophical texts, even the most popular ones, from the earliest time onwards. It is not a model that I wish to impose upon the Indian texts, but rather one that emerges from a normal philological reading of them when special attention is paid to the terminology used.

The purpose of this paper therefore is to draw attention to the fact that some of the most popular Indian texts can actually be read as manuals of yoga, i.e. as popular texts *presupposing* some kind of systematic yoga consciously dealing with and covering the three aspects mentioned above. Accordingly, a few major texts have been considered to exhibit the central role of yoga in Indian philosophy.

The Dhammapada

Let us, to begin with, take the celebrated Buddhist text, *Dhammapada* (Dhp.) and briefly see what it has to say about *citta*, its normal activities, the way to stop them, and the result to be derived from such endeavours. [2]

When *citta* is *abhāvita* it is penetrated by *rāga* (13), when it is *subhāvita* it is not penetrated by *rāga* (14, cf. 89). The normal activities of mind are described in terms such as *phandana* (Sa. *spandana*), *capala, dunnivāraya* (Sa. *durnivārya*) (33) and *dunniggaha* (Sa. *durnigraha*) (35). Mind, *citta*, is said to 'quiver', *pariphandati* (34). A *citta* that is *micchāpaṇihita* will do us harm (42), one that is *sammāpaṇihita* will bring us happiness (43).

The task then is to 'tame' the normal activities of mind, *citta*. The verbs and terms to indicate this are: *dam-* (31), *rakṣ-, gup-* (36), *saṃyama* (37) and the like. One must

avoid the condition where citta is *anavaṭṭhita* (38), *anavassuta*, or *ananvāhata* (39). A *nisedho manaso piyehi* must be made (390).

By bringing the normal activities of mind to cessation one attains *nirvāṇa, yogakṣema* (23), *sukha* (36), one becomes free from *mārabandhana* (77), and from *bhaya* (39). A wise man will cleanse himself (i.e. his soul) from the impurities of mind, *citta-k(i)lesa* (88). His senses must be subdued (94), his mind must be *santa* (Sa. *śānta*) (96). He must be *susamāhita* (378). Other synonyms for *nirvāṇa, sukha,* etc. are *saṃtuṭṭhi* (Sa. *saṃtuṣṭi = saṃtoṣa*) (204) and *upasama* (Sa. *upaśama*) (205). The ideal of *samādhi* is mentioned several times (144, 249, 250, 365), and we also find *yoga* mentioned as a technical term (23, 209, 282). The play on words derived from the root *yuj-* (209) reminds us of passages such as *Bhagavad Gītā* (6.19, 6.28 and 7.1).

The fundamental evil of mind is *avijjā* (Sa. *avidyā*) (243). One could argue that this is also the case in YS (see 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.24 and 2.25).

It must be admitted that neither *abhyāsa* nor *vairāgya* belong to the vocabulary of the *Dhammapada*. It is, however, an ideal to be *vītarāga* (356), and there can be no doubt that numerous Buddhist terms cover the same ground as *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya*. If we render these two words by effort (cf. YS 1.13) and detachment (YS 1.15) we have numerous corresponding Buddhist terms such as *apramāda*, etc. that cover the same semantic field. In fact we only have to recall the Four (Buddhist) Truths of the Aryans. [3] The ideal here is also, as in the *Yogasūtra*, to obtain *nirodha* so as to get rid of suffering, *duḥkha*. Under normal circumstances, as in the *Yogasūtra*, our mind is under the sway of *avidyā, tṛṣṇā,* etc. (known universally as *kleśa*-s). Peace of mind is achieved by following the *aṣṭāṅgikamārga*, often summarised as *śīla, samādhi* and *prajñā*. Yoga, of course, is a system of therapeutics, and the Four Buddhist Facts can be compared, as in the commentaries to the *Yogasūtra*, to *roga, rogahetu, ārogya* and *bhaiṣajya* in medicine. [4]

So, to sum up, in the *Dhammapada* as well as in early Buddhism in general, the ideal is to achieve peace of mind by means of yoga. Under normal circumstances, mind is 'uneasy', or even 'sick', *duḥkha*. By effort, and by detachment its normal activities can be appeased. It is thus brought into a healthy state of happiness and freedom from normal karmic unrest. There remains a lot to be said about the psychological and logical implications of this simple therapeutic scheme. Here, however, my only intention has been to point out that early Buddhism is just one kind of systematic yoga among others. Whether mind finds peace *in itself*, or in the self, in emptiness or in pure mind, was a matter of endless controversy in ancient India. For present purposes, however, it is sufficient to emphasise that most schools were in complete agreement about the ideal of yoga understood as *cittavṛtti-nirodha*.

The Bhagavad Gītā

Let us now turn our attention to another celebrated text, the *Bhagavad Gītā* (BG). [5] As a piece of literature the *Gītā* is interesting because of the dilemma it reflects between a *vita activa* and a *vita contemplativa*. It is a book on the conflict between social and personal values and needs. More important than anything else are one's obligations to society, one's *dharma*. Once this is seen to one is more or less free to practise almost any religion according to one's personal needs. There are many kinds of yoga known

to the anonymous author of this text. One of these is *buddhiyoga* (BG 2.49, 10.10, 18.57), or *buddhisamyoga* (BG 6.43), clearly a loaded technical term.

Under normal circumstances *citta*, or *manah*, is *cañcala* (BG 6.23 and 6.34) and *asthira* (BG 6.26) or *calita* (BG 6.37). Mind is difficult to curb, it is *durnigraha* (BG 6.35). The ideal is to let *citta* become *viniyata* (BG 6.18), *yata* (BG 6.19), *niruddha* (BG 6.20)- suggesting *cittavṛttinirodha* of the *Yogasūtra* (1.2). The means to do this is *yogasevā* (BG 6.20). Mind, *citta* can be brought to *samādhi* by means of *abhyāsayoga* (BG 12.9). Most explicit is BG 6.20 which states:

> *yatroparamate cittaṃ niruddhaṃ yogasevayā /*
> *yatra caivātmanātmānaṃ paśyann ātmani tuṣyati //*

It is, as in the *Yogasūtra*, by means of *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya* that one can obtain peace of mind (6.35):

> *asaṃśayaṃ mahābāho mano durnigrahaṃ calam /*
> *abhyāsena tu Kaunteya vairāgyena ca gṛhyate //*

As in YS 1.13, *abhyāsa* is defined in terms of *yatna* (6.36):

> *asaṃyatātmanā yogo duṣprāpa iti me matih /*
> *vaśyātmanā tu yatatā śakyo 'vāptum upāyatah //*

In short, all the basic elements of systematic yoga are already tangibly present in the *Bhagavad Gītā*, a document at least 2000 years old in its transmitted form.

The *Bhagavad Gītā* often uses *saṃnyāsa* (9.28), or *tyāga* (5.10) where we would perhaps expect *vairāgya*. A 'definition' of *vairāgya*, corresponding to that of YS 1.15, would seem to be given in BG 2.52–53.

Even in such old favourites as the episodes of Nala and Sāvitrī, the heroes and heroines are said to be *susamāhita*, or *dhyānayogaparāyaṇa*, etc. when they want to obtain some sort of (secular) *siddhi*. This vocabulary too obviously reflects and presupposes some sort of systematic yoga in the background.

In the later portions of the *Mahābhārata*—especially in the *Mokṣadharmaparvan*—there are, as has already been pointed out a long time ago, many 'forerunners' of later systematical yoga as known from YS. [6] But perhaps 'forerunner' is not the right word. Systematic yoga may well be as old, or even older, than early Buddhism.

Mahāyāna Texts

The texts of Mahāyāna, *sūtra*-s as well as *śāstra*-s, are also full of yoga. Most characteristic in this regard is perhaps a statement from the celebrated *Kāśyapaparivarta* § 144, often quoted (e.g. by Candrakīrti, in his *Prasannapadā*, p. 48) to the effect that a monk who has achieved *saṃjñāvedayitanirodhasamāpatti*—much the same as *samādhi*—has nothing more to achieve. [7] Another early and authoritative text, the *Brahmaparipṛcchā* (quoted in ibid., p. 540), defines *nirvāṇa* in terms of the *praśama* of all marks, the *uparati*, the cessation, of all mental activities. This takes place when there is no *utpāda* and no *nirodha* of any dharma in the tranquil mind of a *yogācāra*—here obviously a technical term for a Mahāyānist yogi. It would not be an exaggeration to say that this is also largely what the 'philosophy' of Nāgārjuna and his followers is all about; and we need only to look at his magnum opus, the famous *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (MK) [8] to support this.

As long as mind is under the spell of *avidyā* (cf. YS) it creates an 'expansion' (*prapañca*) of the world in which some things are said to exist (*asti, sat, bhāva*), whereas others are said not to exist (*nāsti, asat, abhāva*). As long as mind makes such distinctions (*vikalpa*) we find ourselves in a restless state of suffering. By means of *prajñā* a yogi can 'see' that everything (the *skandha*-s, etc.) is *śūnya*, i.e. *vastuśūnya*. Once we realise that all things are thus empty there is obviously no longer any 'object' for mind to be concerned about; in other words, there is no *cittagocara* (MK 18.7). Here we finally find ourselves in a state of *mokṣa, nirvāṇa, anutpāda, śūnyatā*, even *vijñāna* and *śiva*. This scheme is exactly the same as in the *Dhammapada* and the *Bhagavad Gītā*. The difference lies only in the terminology and the 'ontological' background.

In Yogācāra philosophy the situation is much the same. Here too the yogi has to understand that everything is *śūnyatā, vijñaptimātra*, and *cittamātra*, and thus one obtains peace and even becomes a Buddha. The essential point is that mind has no object, nothing to 'cling to'. As long as mind has an *ālambana*, an *upalambha*, i.e. an object of support or perception, it remains in painful activity. Once it is understood that the 'object' is not real, it somehow disappears; one thus gets rid of *avidyā*, and thereby attains peace of mind.

However, it is not sufficient simply to 'understand' that everything is empty; one must also get used to this idea. That is, one must persuade oneself that this is actually so. The required conviction is acquired through repeated practice and drilling. Hence, the endless number of repetitions in most Mahāyāna texts.

The Āgamaśāstra

This work, ascribed to a certain Gauḍapāda, and a basic authority in Śaṃkara's school of Vedānta, is influenced both by Madhyamaka as well as Yogācāra. The book is full of yoga. [9]

The yogic terminology here used is once again reminiscent of the *Dhammapada* and *Bhagavad Gītā*. The central tenet here is that it is thanks to *māyā* that mind, *citta*, is normally active, *calati* (4.61). The root *spand-* is also used to indicate its activity (4.48, 4.72). Ideally mind, *citta* or *manaḥ*, must stop being mind (3.31), i.e. one must control it (*manaso nigraha*) (3.41) so that it no longer moves. In this state of *samādhir acalo 'bhayaḥ* (3.37), *citta* no longer has any *viṣaya* (4.72), no *artha* (4.26), no *nimitta* (4.27), no *saṅga* (4.77). The author coins a new word for an old set of ideas when he calls this state of *samādhi*, where one's mind is no longer in touch with anything, '*asparśayoga*' (3.39, 4.2).

In the study of Indian philosophy it is so easy to be misled by words. New words do not necessarily imply new ideas. Often the differences between the various schools are only matters of new words. There is nothing essentially new in the sort of yoga found in the famous *Āgamaśāstra*.

This is not the place for me to discuss the *nature* of yoga, nor is it the place for me to suggest an interpretation of what is experienced in the attractive state of *samādhi*. It is sufficient here to emphasise that the experience of *samādhi* has an enormous appeal to virtually all Indian philosophers. As far as I can see the experience of *samādhi* does not bring about the discovery of any *new* truths. On the contrary, and this is important not to overlook, this experience rather serves to intensify and vivify our old opinions so as to make them much more clear and convincing to us. In a sense one could say that

our dreams come true in *samādhi*; here we are united with our ideals. The mystical experience of *samādhi* has, in other words, to do with hypnosis and autosuggestion.

In conclusion, it can be said that if one wants to understand Indian philosophy one also has to understand yoga. To understand yoga it is not sufficient to practise yoga. One must also make yoga an *object* of rational study. Yoga has nothing to do with religion as such. As already pointed out long ago by Scandinavian scholars such as Alfred Lehmann and Sigurd Lindquist, the phenomena associated with yoga can best be understood in terms of hypnosis, autosuggestion and psychotherapy. [10]

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NOTES

[1] Among the numerous editions of *Yogasūtra* there is a recent and very convenient one by Konrad Meisig (1988) *Yogasūtra-Konkordanz* (Wiesbaden, Otto Harrassowitz). A translation of the first chapter is to be found in Fernando Tola & Carmen Dragonetti (1987) *The Yogasūtras of Patañjali* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass)

[2] Again there are many editions of the Dhp. One of the best is still V. Fausbøll (1990) *The Dhammapada* (London). It contains an accurate, but not very beautiful, Latin version.

[3] I understand the term *āryasatya* in the sense of the 'facts' [accepted by] the Arya(n)s, i.e. by the Buddhists. To speak of truths, or facts, that are 'noble' does not make much sense.

[4] Cf. WEZLER, A. (1984) On the quadruple division of the Yogaśāstra, the Caturvyūhatva of the Cikitsāśāstra and the 'Four Noble Truths' of the Buddha, *Indologica Taurinensia*, XII, pp. 289–337.

[5] From a philological point of view the best translation is still that of Richard Garbe (1978) *Die Bhagavadgītā* (Leipzig, 1921; reprinted Darmstadt). The translations of Edgerton, Zaehner and van Buitenen, though more recent, are not always free from philological problems. Cf. my paper, 'Lokasaṃgraha, Buddhism and Buddhiyoga in the Gītā' (to appear in the R. K. Sharma Felicitation Volume, New Delhi, 1994).

[6] See, most recently, V. M. BEDEKAR (1968) 'Yoga in the Moksadharmaparvan of the Mahābhārata,' in: G. Oberhammer *Beiträge zur Geistesgeschichte Indiens. Festschrift für Erich Frauwallner* (Vienna) pp. 43–52.

[7] Sanskrit text ed. by L. de La Vallée Poussin (1970) *Mūlamadhyamakakārikās de Nāgārjuna avec le Prasannapadā Commentaire de Candrakīrti* (St. Petersburg, 1903–1913; reprinted Osnabrück).

[8] There is a revised ed. of MK in my *Nāgārjunas filosofiske værker* (Copenhagen, 1982).

[9] The best (but not perfect) edition was reprinted recently: BHATTACHARYA VIDHUSHEKHARA (Ed.) (1989) *The Āgamaśāstra of Gauḍapāda* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass). It is not superseded by THOMAS E. WOOD (1990) *The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad and the Āgama Śāstra. An Investigation into the Meaning of the Vedānta* (Honolulu).

[10] LEHMANN, A. (1920) *Overtro og trolddom*, 1–2, (Copenhagen); and LINDQUIST S. (1932) *Die Methoden des Yoga* (Lund, Glerup).

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The Mind–Body Relationship in Pāli Buddhism: A Philosophical Investigation

PETER HARVEY

ABSTRACT *The Suttas* indicate physical conditions for success in meditation, and also acceptance of a not-Self life-principle (primarily viññāna) which is (usually) dependent on the mortal physical body. In the Abhidhamma *and commentaries, the physical acts on the mental through the senses and through the 'basis' for mind-organ and mind-consciousness, which came to be seen as the 'heart-basis'. Mind acts on the body through two 'intimations': fleeting modulations in the primary physical elements. Various forms of* rūpa *are also said to originate dependent on* citta *and other types of* rūpa. *Meditation makes possible the development of a 'mind-made body' and control over physical elements through psychic powers. The formless rebirths and the state of cessation are anomalous states of mind-without-body, or body-without-mind, with the latter presenting the problem of how mental phenomena can arise after being completely absent. Does this twin-category process pluralism avoid the problems of substance-dualism?*

The Interaction of Body and Mind in Spiritual Development

In the discourses of the Buddha (*Suttas*), a number of passages indicate that the state of the body can have an impact on spiritual development. For example, it is said that the Buddha could only attain the meditative state of *jhāna* once he had given up harsh asceticism and built himself up by taking sustaining food (M.I. 238ff.). Similarly, it is said that health and a good digestion are among qualities which enable a person to make speedy progress towards enlightenment (M.I. 95). The crucial spiritual quality of mindfulness (*sati*), moreover, is first developed with processes of the physical body as object. This enables mindfulness to be strengthened, before being applied to more illusive mental states.

It is also clearly stated that the attainment of *jhāna*, meditative trance, has a marked effect on the body. Of the first of the four *jhānas*, it is said that the meditator, "drenches, saturates, permeates, suffuses this very body with joy and happiness" (M.I. 276f.). On the third *jhāna*, Buddhaghosa also refers to "the exceedingly superior *rūpa* [matter] originated by that happiness associated with the group of mental states (*nāma-kāya*)" (Vism. 163).

Physical and mental/spiritual states are thus seen as constantly interacting; they are not two totally separate spheres. As Winston King says:

> at any given moment of experience, body-mind represents an intimate organic unity. For though Buddhism recognizes a polarity between mental and physical constituents of sentient beings, it never sharply divides them but on the contrary strongly emphasizes the close relationship of all mental and physical states. (1964, p. 19)

The 'Life-principle' (*Jīva*) and the 'mortal body' (*Sarīra*)

The Buddha was often asked a set of questions known as the 'undetermined (*avyāk-ata*) questions' which included 'is the life-principle the same as the mortal body' and 'is the life-principle different from the mortal body?'. The questions are said to be 'undetermined' because the Buddha did not accept any of the views expressed in the questions. He 'set aside' the questions as timewasting and misconstrued. The crucial reason that he saw them as misconstrued was that he saw them as asking about a permanent Self (S. IV. 395). In the case of the above questions: how is a permanent Self/life-principle related to the mortal body? As he did not accept such a Self, he could not accept any view on how it was related to the body! Apart from this, he also seems not to have accepted either view because he saw body and that which enlivened it as neither identical nor totally distinct. That is, while he did not accept a permanent life-principle, he accepted a changing, empirical life-principle. This life-principle was partly *dependent* on the mortal physical body, but not in such a way that the death of the body destroyed it; this would be to deny rebirth. The life-principle is normally sustained by (and sustains) the body, but it can be sustained without it, too.

The evidence for the Buddhist acceptance of a 'life-principle' is as follows. At D.I. 157–58, the Buddha is asked the undetermined questions on the life-principle. Part of his reply is that one who had attained any of the four meditative *jhānas* would not give either answer. The same is then said of someone in the fourth *jhāna* who applies his mind to 'knowledge and vision' (*ñāna-dassana*). Elsewhere, 'knowledge and vision' is said to consist of a series of meditation-based knowledges (D.I. 76–7). The first is where one comprehends:

> This body (*kāyo*) of mine has form (*rūpī*), it is made from the four great elements, produced by mother and father ... is subject to erasion, abrasion, dissolution and distintegration; this is my consciousness (*viññāna*), here supported (*sitaṃ*), here bound.

This suggests that one who is proficient in meditation is aware of a kind of life-principle in the form of consciousness (perhaps with some accompaniments), this being *dependent* on the mortal physical body. In this, consciousness is like its synonym *citta*, which is said to be 'without a mortal body (*asarīram*)' (Dhp. 37) but to be 'born of the mortal body (*sarīra-ja*)' (Thag. 355).

The early Buddhist understanding of the life-principle, in the context of rebirth, can be seen at D. II. 332ff. Here, the materialist prince Payāsi feels that he has disproved rebirth as, when he put a criminal man in a sealed jar and let him die, he saw no life-principle leaving the jar when it was opened. In order to show that this gruesome 'experiment' does not disprove rebirth, Mahā-Kassapa argues that, as the prince's attendants do not see his life-principle 'entering or leaving' him when he dreams, he cannot expect to see the life-principle of a dead person 'entering or leaving' (D. II. 334). Thus the life-principle is not denied, but accepted, as an invisible phenomenon.

Certainly, the start of life, at conception, is seen as involving the flux-of-consciousness, from a past life, entering the womb and, along with the requisite physical conditions, leading to the development of a new being in the womb:

> 'Were consciousness, Ānanda, not to fall into the mother's womb, would mind-and-body (*nāma-rūpa*) be constituted there?' 'It would not, Lord'.
> 'Were consciousness, having fallen into the mother's womb, to turn aside

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from it, would mind-and-body come to birth in this present state?'. 'It would not, Lord.' (D. II. 62-3)

It can thus be seen that the life-principle referred to by Mahā-Kassapa seems to be, in the main, the flux of consciousness which enters the womb at conception and leaves the body at death.

In arguing against another 'experiment' of Payāsi concerning a life-principle, Mahā-Kassapa says that a body "endowed with vitality, heat and consciousness" is lighter and more pliable than a dead body, just as a heated iron ball "endowed with heat and (hot) air" is lighter and more pliable than a cool one (D. II. 334-5). Moreover, only a body so endowed can be aware of sense-objects, just as a conch-shell-trumpet will only make a sound when "endowed with a man, an effort and air" (D. II. 337-8).

A third simile is that of a fire-drill which will only make fire when properly used, not when chopped up to look for the 'fire' in it (D. II. 340-2). That is, the life-principle is not a separate *part* of a person, but is a process which occurs when certain conditions are present, namely 'vitality (*āyu*)' 'heat (*usmā*)' and consciousness. This life-principle complex relates to the body like heat and surrounding hot air to heated iron. A more modern analogy might be to see it as like the magnetic-field of a piece of magnetised iron: both heat and magnetism may be a property of iron, but this does not prevent them being transferred to something else: an analogy for rebirth.

It can thus be seen that the 'life-principle' accepted by the *Suttas* is a complex of 'vitality, heat and consciousness'. 'Heat' is a physical process, 'vitality' consists, according to the *Abhidhamma,* of one 'life-faculty' (*jīvit-indriya*) which is physical, and one which is mental, and consciousness is mental. This complex consists of conditionally arisen changing processes, which are not identical with the mortal body (except for heat and the physical life-faculty), nor totally different from it, but partly dependent on it. If the life-principle is taken as a (non-existent) substantial Self, it is meaningless to say that 'it' is the 'same as' or 'different from' the mortal body, but if it is recognised as not-Self, then these views can be seen as actually false. The life-principle is neither the same as nor different from the mortal body, as the relationship is that of the mingling of mutually-dependent processes. Thus at S.I. 206, when a nature-spirit (*yakkha*) says "'Material shape is not alive (*na jīvan*)' say the Buddhas, then how does this [life-principle] find this mortal body?", the Buddha replies by outlining his view of the stages of embryonic growth. As seen above, the mortal body of a person develops because consciousness, the crucial factor in the life-principle process, enters the womb at conception; consciousness then remains supported by and bound to the body (though meditation can lead to it becoming less dependent on the body: see below).

The Inter-relation of *Nāma* and *Rūpa*

The most common way of dividing the component processes of a person is into '*nāma*', literally 'name' and '*rūpa*', 'form', 'material shape'. *Rūpa* is said, in the *Suttas,* to consist of the 'four great elements', or the four 'primaries': solidity (literally 'earth'), cohesion (literally 'water'), heat (literally 'fire') and motion (literally 'air'), and *rūpa* 'derived' (*upādāya*) from these. The Theravādin *Abhidhamma* enumerates the forms of 'derived' *rūpa* as follows:

1-5: the sensitive parts of the five physical sense-organs;
6-9: visible appearance, sound, smell and taste;

10–12: the faculties of femininity, masculinity and physical life;

13–14: bodily intimation and verbal intimation (see below);

15:    space;

16–23: lightness, pliability, workableness, integration, maintenance, ageing, and impermanence of *rūpa*, and nutritive essence (Dhs. section 596); later texts also add the 'heart basis'—see below.

Of these, items 10–23 cannot be sensed by the physical sense-organs, but are known only by the mind (Dhs. 980), be this by inference or clairvoyance. Apart from the occurrence of the 'four great elements' and the various forms of 'derived' *rūpa*, all of which are mutually conditioning in various ways, there is no 'material substance': *rūpa* is just the occurrence of these states or processes. However, D. J. Kalupahana argues that the four primary elements can be seen as 'material substance' as they are the underlying basis of 'derived' matter (1976, p. 100). He compares this with John Locke's idea of material 'substance' as an imperceptible basis which must be postulated as the 'support' for material qualities such as hardness, shape or colour. This comparison is inappropriate, though, for the *Abhidhamma* holds that the primary elements *can* be directly sensed, by touch (at least in the case of solidity, heat and motion). He likewise holds that *citta* is like a mental 'substance' as 'mental states' (*cetasikas*) depend on it. But again, *citta* is not an unexperienceable support of that which can be experienced. It is itself experiencable. Having wrongly argued that the four elements and *citta* are like two substances, Kalupahana then wrongly interprets a text as saying that these cannot interact (1976, p. 99). He cites Asl. 313, "Where there is a difference of kind, there is no stimulus. The Ancients (*porāṇā*) say that sensory stimulus is of similar kinds, not of different kinds." Kalupahana sees this as saying that mind and matter cannot affect each other, whereas the context shows that it is simply saying the the sensitive part of a sense-organ only responds to the relevant kind of stimulus (e.g. the ear to sounds).

In the *Suttas*, *nāma* is used to refer to all aspects of mind except consciousness itself. In later texts, it usually also includes consciousness. As 'name' it essentially refers to those states which are intensional: which take an object. According to the *Abhidhamma*, this differentiates all such states from the *rūpa* states, which never take an object (Dhs. 1408). On the other hand, states of *nāma* (i.e. mental states) have no *rūpa*, or 'form', 'material shape'.

In the *Abhidhamma*, mental states and material states are seen as interacting from the moment of conception. The *Paṭṭhāna* Vol. I, pp. 5, 8, 9; see CR. I. 5–11) holds that, at this time, states of *nāma* and *rūpa* are mutually related to each other by a number of conditions, the meaning of which is explained by Vism. 535:

i) conascent *(sahajāta)* condition (the states support each other by arising together);

ii) mutuality *(aññamañña)* condition (the states mutually arouse and consolidate each other, like sticks in a tripod supporting each other);

iii) support *(nissaya)* condition (the states act as a foundation for each other, as earth is a support or foundation for trees);

iv) presence *(atthi)* and non-disappearance *(avigata)* conditions.

Moreover (p. 7), throughout life, mental states act as 'postnascent' conditions for physical ones, i.e. they help to consolidate those physical states which have already arisen (Vism. 537).

The commentator Buddhaghosa explains the inter-dependence of the two at Vism.

596. On its own, *nāma* lacks efficient power, for it does not eat, speak or move; likewise *rūpa* lacks efficient power, on its own, for it has no desire to do such things. Each can only 'occur' when 'supported by' (*nissāya*) the other. The relationship between the two is like that of a blind man (*rūpa*) who carries an immobile cripple (*nāma*) on his shoulders: together they can prosper. They are like two sheaves of reeds which lean against each other and support each other (Vism. 595). Buddhaghosa then quotes an undetermined source in support of his position:

> They cannot come to be by their own strength,
> Or yet maintain themselves by their own strength;
> Conforming to the influence of other *dhammas*,
> Weak in themselves and conditioned, they come to be.
> They come to be with others as condition.
> They are aroused by others as objects;
> They are produced by object and condition
> And each by a *dhamma* other [than itself]. (Vism. 596–7)

Of course, the reference to 'object', here, shows that the lines *mainly* concern *nāma*.

The Action of the Physical on the Mental

The most obvious way in which the physical affects the mental is through the process of perceiving objects. From the *Suttas* it is clear that consciousness (and other mental states) arise dependent on sense-organ and sense-object. A common refrain is:

> Eye-consciousness arises dependent on the eye and visible shape; the coming together of the three is stimulation; from stimulation as condition is feeling; what one feels one cognizes . . . (e.g. M.I. 111)

Parallel things are also said about ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness and mentation-consciousness. M.I. 190 makes it clear that a sense-consciousness is not only conditioned by a sense-organ and its object, but also by an appropriate act of attention. Again, in the *Adhidhamma*, it is clear that the arising of a sense-consciousness is not only conditioned by physical factors, but also by mental ones: the previous moments of *citta* such as the *bhavaṅga* state, the latent ground state of consciousness (Ptn. I. 312–13, 369; CR. I. 338–39, 407; Vism. 458–60). That is, consciousness is dependent on physical states, but *also* on previous states of consciousness and other mental states.

What, though, is said of whether there is a physical basis for mind-consciousness? The *Abhidhamma* clearly specifies that there is such a basis (*vatthu*), though it does not specify what it is. The *Paṭṭhāna* (Vol. I, p. 5; see CR. I. 6) says:

> The *rūpa* supported by which mentation-element (*mano-dhātu*) and mentation-consciousness-element (*mano-viññāṇa-dhātu*) occur, that *rūpa* is related to them and their associated states by support condition . . . by presence condition . . . by non-disappearance condition.

Likewise it is said (p. 72):

> Conditioned by eye-sense-sphere is eye-consciousness; . . . conditioned by basis (*vatthu*) are (karmically) fruitional and functional indeterminate (mental) groups.

Moreover, karmically active mental states are also seen as conditioned by such a basis (ibid). However, the physical 'basis' of mind is itself said to be dependent on mental

states, from the moment of conception (p. 70). While this basis is always a 'prenascent' (i.e. prior) condition for mentation (that which adverts to objects), it is not always so for mentation-consciousness (p. 71). This must be because, at conception, mentation-consciousness is that which is transmitted from a dead person and, on entering the womb, conditions the development of a new psycho-physical organism, including mentation and the physical basis for the continuance of consciousness. In the ongoing flow of life, the mental *dhammas* mutually condition each other, but are also conditioned by the physical 'basis' (ibid.).

In the later Theravāda tradition, the physical 'basis' of mind is specified as the 'heart-basis' (*hadaya-vatthu*) (Vism. 537), and this was added to the list of types of 'derived' *rūpa* (the Sarvāstivādin tradition remained uncommitted as to what the 'basis' was). The heart was probably chosen as, in terms of immediate experience, many emotional states seem to be physically centred in the middle of the chest. Certainly, many of the physical sensations associated with meditation are 'felt' here.

The 'heart-basis' is said to act as the 'support' for mentation-element and mentation-consciousness-element, and to 'uphold' them, being itself dependent on the blood (Vism. 447). Buddhaghosa sees the 'basis' as a tiny region of the heart (Vism. 256), and dismisses the brain as a lump of marrow in the skull (Vism. 259). W. F. Jayasuriya, though, argues that 'heart' is not literally meant, and that what may be referred to is the entire nervous system (including the brain): which certainly is dependent on (the oxygen supply in) blood (1963, appendix A). Yet if the 'basis' is seen as present from conception, it cannot be identified, as such, with either the heart or nervous system in their fully developed forms.

Buddhaghosa also holds that in being the 'basis' for mind-consciousness, the heart-basis is not a 'door' for consciousness, like eye-sensitivity (Vism. 451). That is, it is not a place where consciousness receives content from outside (Asl. 85). It simply supports it occurrence. Similarly, it is not a 'door' to setting up activity in the body, as 'bodily intimation' and 'vocal intimation' are (Vism. 451).

The Mind's Action on the Body

Perhaps the main way in which the mind produces effect in the body is through states of mind leading to speech and physical behaviour. In the Theravādin *Abhidhamma*, the two crucial intermediaries in these situations are:

i) 'vocal intimation' (*vācī-viññatti*);
ii) 'bodily intimation' (*kāya-viññatti*).

In the *Dhammasaṅganī* (sec. 596), these are described as forms of 'derived (*upāda*) matter (*rūpa*)'. That is they are forms of matter dependent on the 'four great elements'.

'Bodily intimation' is defined (Dhs. 636) as follows:

> That state of bodily tension or excitement, or state of excitement, on the part of one who advances, or moves back, or fixes the gaze, or glances round, or retracts an arm, or stretches it forth: the intimation, the making known, the state of having made known a *citta* (mind-moment or thought) ...

Dhs. 637 says much the same on 'vocal intimation'. That is, both are seen as physical states which make known a thought. As Buddhaghosa says, they 'display intention' (Vism. 448f.) and communicate (Asl. 82 and 87).

Dhs. 667 describes the two 'intimations' as among states of *rūpa* which are '*citta-*

born' and 'citta-caused', as 'originated from citta'. However, the two intimations are the only kind of rūpa which are said to be 'coexistent with citta' (Dhs. 669) and to 'follow after citta' (Dhs. 671). That is they are the only kind of material dhammas that last no longer than a moment of citta, and change in unison with citta.

In his commentary on these passages, though (Asl. 337), Buddhaghosa explains that, "in the ultimate sense", only the phenomena on which the two intimations depend are genuinely "originated from citta", and neither are they literally "coexistent with citta". This is because a citta exists only for one seventeenth of the time a rūpa dhamma lasts (Vism. 614). In fact, Buddhaghosa sees the two intimations as only 'nominal' dhammas (Vism. 450): they are not separate dhammas, but only aspects of other 'real' rūpa dhammas, which can be said to be genuinely 'originated from citta'. They are 'nominal' in a similar way to that in which the 'impermanence' of rūpa is a nominal dhamma.

As Asl. 83 explains:

> Now the body originated from citta: *that* is not 'intimation'. But there is a certain alteration in the mode (ākāra-vikāro) of the primary (physical) elements when set up by citta, through which, as condition, the motion element is able to strengthen and agitate the conascent body. This is intimation.

More specifically, Vism. 447–8 says:

> Bodily intimation is the alteration in the mode in the citta-originated motion element that causes the occurrence of moving forward etc., which alteration in the mode is a condition for the tension, upholding and moving of the conascent rūpa-body.

Similarly, Vism. 448 sees vocal intimation as an 'alteration in the mode in the citta-originated solidity element'.

Thus the two intimations are seen as fleeting modulations in the 'motion' and 'solidity' elements, which modulations can last as long as a citta (mind-moment), but not as long as other rūpa dhammas. They are 'nominal' dhammas as they are merely modulations of other 'real' dhammas.

Thus the mind sets up movement in the body by altering the mode of rūpa produced by citta. Non-solid mind does not so much 'bump into' extended, solid matter, as modulate the *way* in which aspects of matter arise. Note that the 'motion/air' element might be related to the modern concept of electrical discharges in the nerves: at M.I. 185ff., there is reference to "airs/winds which shoot across several limbs". In that case, the mind would move the body by effecting the electrical modulation of nerve discharges.

The Meaning of 'Citta-originated'

The discussion still leaves the meaning of 'citta-originated' (citta-samuṭṭhāna) rūpa states to be determined. Dhs. 667 holds that the two intimations are always 'citta-originated', and that certain other rūpa dhammas, including the four primary elements, may be, when they are 'born of citta', 'citta-caused' (citta-ja, citta-hetuka). Does this imply that citta can actually create certain kinds of matter, or what?

The Paṭṭhāna (Vol. I, pp. 22–23) holds that there are four ways in which a rūpa dhamma may 'originate': by citta, by karma, and by natural physical processes related to 'nutriment' and temperature. Nevertheless, citta cannot 'originate' matter on its own: citta-originated rūpa arises dependent on the primary elements, and skilful or

unskilful mental processes (ibid). This is because any 'derived' *rūpa* depends on the primary elements, and these always arise dependent on each other. Thus the position of the Theravādin *Abhidhamma* seems to be that *citta* can produce or create certain kinds of matter, but not literally 'out of nothing', for '*citta*-originated' matter is also dependent on other forms of matter.

The kind of mental processes that can 'originate' *rūpa* are said to include: desire, energy, thought (*citta*), investigation (when concentrated these are the 'four bases of psychic power'), volition, and meditative trance (*jhāna*) (Ptn. I, pp. 2, 7, 8). These act as conditions for the origination of *rūpa dhammas* by being conascent with them (i.e. born at the same time), and supporting them by their continued presence (pp. 5, 8, 9).

As explained by Buddhaghosa (Vism. 624):

> The *citta*-originated becomes evident through one who is joyful or grieved. For the *rūpa* arisen at the time when he is joyful is smooth, tender, fresh and soft to touch. That arisen at the time when he is grieved is parched, stale and ugly.

This clearly implies that mental states effect the kind of physical states that arise in the body. As Asl. 82 says:

> When a thought 'I will move forward or step back' occurs, it sets up bodily qualities. Now there are eight groups of these bodily qualities: the four primaries ... and the four depending on these: colour, odour, taste, and nutritive essence [examples of 'derived' *rūpa*]. Among these, motion strengthens, supports, agitates, moves backward and forward the conascent material body.

The Mind-made Body

While mental processes are normally seen as conditioned by physical ones, there are said to be situations where this is less so than normal. Thus one *Sutta* passage, after referring to an awareness of consciousness as dependent on the physical body (see above, life-principle section), refers to a meditative state in which the meditator applies himself to calling up a 'mind-made body' (*mano-maya kāya*):

> He calls up from this body another body, having form, mind-made, having all limbs and parts, not deficient in any organ. Just as if, O king, a man were to pull a reed out of its sheath, he would know 'This is the reed, this the sheath. The reed is different from the sheath. It is from the sheath that the reed has been drawn forth'. (D.I. 77)

This shows that that consciousness is seen as able to leave the physical body by means of a mind-made body. Such a body could be seen as a kind of 'subtle body', for a being with a mind-made body is said to feed on joy (D.I. 17), not on solid nutriment (D.I. 195): it thus lacks the four great elements of the physical body (solidity, cohesion, heat and motion: D.I. 195). As such a body relates to the 'realm of (pure) form', the subtle matter composing it can only be visible and audible matter (Vibh. 405). However, the mind-made body is invisible to the normal eye (Pati. II. 209). It occupies space, but does not impinge on gross physical matter, for the 'selfhood' of a certain god with a mind-made body is said to be as large as two or three fields, but to cause no harm to anyone (A. III. 122). With such a body, a person can exercise psychic powers such as going through solid objects, being in many places at once, or flying (D.I. 78).

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Psychic Powers

In the *Suttas*, there is a standard list of meditation-based 'psychic powers' (*iddhis*). These include: multiplying one's form; going through a wall as if through space; diving into the earth as if through water; walking on water as if on the ground; flying, cross-legged, through the air (M.I. 494). The Buddha is said to have claimed that he could do these either with his mind-made body, or with his physical body of the four elements (S.V. 283). At D. II. 89, for example, the Buddha crosses a river by simply disappearing from one bank and instantaneously appearing on the other.

Such powers, if one is to take them seriously, clearly involve remarkable 'mental' control of matter, whether this be the matter of one's own body or of objects passed through, for example. In discussing such powers, Buddhaghosa says that when, for example, diving into the earth, the earth usually only becomes water for the performer (Vism. 396), but it *can* also become water for others too. This suggests that, when psychic powers are exercised by means of the 'mind-made' body, there is no effect on ordinary matter, but that when it is done with the physical body, such matter is affected.

The late canonical text the *Patisambhidāmagga* goes into some detail on how the powers are developed. They require that a person has attained one of the meditative *jhāna* states and has developed the four 'bases of psychic power': concentration of desire, of energy, of thought and of investigation (Pati. II. 205). As seen above, these four states are listed in the *Patthāna* as mental states which can 'originate' *rūpa* states. To develop the power of diving through the earth, the meditator attains meditative concentration by focussing on water, then makes water appear where there is earth (p. 208). To walk on water or fly, meditation is on earth, then earth is made to appear in water or the air (ibid). The implicit principle, here, is that by focusing on, investigating, and gaining knowledge of an element (e.g. earth/solidity), one can gain power over it, and change other elements into it. The later tradition, though, holds that all physical matter contains all four primary elements, though in different 'intensity'. Thus to change water into earth, the solidity element in it becomes predominant rather than the cohesion element.

All this suggests that, in the Buddhist view, the mind purified, calmed and tuned by meditative concentration has great transformative power over matter, and that the physical world is not as stable as is normally seen. Its transformation is not seen as 'miraculous' or super-natural, though, just super-normal. It is done in a law-like way by drawing on the power of the meditative mind.

The Formless State

However much the mind is seen as normally inter-dependent with body, Buddhism also accepts that there are levels of existence where *only* mental phenomena exist, with nothing whatever of *rūpa*. These are the four 'formless' (*arūpa*) rebirths:

   i) the sphere of infinite space;
   ii) the sphere of infinite consciousness;
   iii) the sphere of nothingness;
   iv) the sphere of neither-cognition-nor-non-cognition.

They correspond exactly to four meditative states, with the same names, attainable from the fourth *jhāna*. The first is attained by transcending any cognition of *rūpa*; that is, by abandoning the metal image that was previously the object of concentration, and

seeing that space is infinite. In the second state, the focus is on the consciousness that had been aware of infinite space. In the third, this object is dropped, and the focus is on the apparent nothingness remaining. In the fourth, this object is dropped and the mind is in an attenuated state where it is hardly functioning (Vism. ch. X).

In these rebirth realms, there are feelings, cognitions, constructing activities such as volition, and mind-consciousness. There are none of the five forms of sense-consciousness, nor even mind-element (*mano*) (Vibh. 407). The 'beings' of such a level are clearly seen as totally bodiless, but this means that their mode-of-being is far from normal. Their 'mode of personality' (*atta-paṭilābha*) is said to be 'formless, made of cognition' (D.I. 195), and their predominant awareness is of such things as infinite space. Thus, while they can be seen as composed of mind separated from any matter, this separation leads to a transformation in their nature: mind cannot be separated from matter without this having an effect on mind. A 'formless' being has thoughts devoid of any kind of sense-perceptions.

The State of Cessation

From the meditative sequence described above, going through the 'formless' attainments, it is also held that a further state can be attained by a meditator. This is the 'cessation of feeling and cognition', or simply the 'attainment of cessation'. This is an anomalous state that, by the combination of profound meditative calming, and of meditative insight, all mental states come to a complete halt. The mind totally shuts down, devoid of even subtle feeling and cognition, due to turning away from even the very refined peace of the fourth formless level. In this state, the heart and breathing stop (M.I. 301–02), but a residual metabolism keep the body alive for up to seven days. Only an *Arahat*, the highest saint who has fully attained *Nibbāna*, or a Non-returner, the second highest saint, can experience cessation (A. III. 194; Vism. 702); they emerge from it experiencing the 'fruit' of their respective attainment (Vism. 708). It is thus one possible route to experiencing *Nibbāna*.

In the *Suttas*, it is said that, while a dead person is without vitality and heat, and their sense-organs are 'scattered', a person in cessation still has vitality and heat, and his sense-organs are 'purified' (M.I. 296). In other contexts (D. II. 334–5), it is said that a living person is one endowed with 'vitality, heat and consciousness'. At M.I. 296, it is notable that there is *no* reference to consciousness. In the Theravādin view, as expressed by Buddhaghosa in chapter 23 of Vism. (pp. 702–9), cessation is 'the non-occurrence of *citta* and mental states as a result of their successive cessation' (p. 702). A person in this state is 'without *citta*' (p. 707). Not even the latent form of mind present in dreamless sleep, *bhavaṅga*, is said to be present. A person in this state is seen as *only* a body, with *no* mental states whatever.

The philosophical problems this raises is: when the meditator emerges from this state, and mental states recommence, how does this occur? If there are *only* physical states occurring in cessation, does this mean that mind re-starts thanks to these alone? This issue is discussed by Griffiths (1986), looking at the Theravādin, Sarvāstivādin, Sautrāntika and Yogācāra views on the matter.

The *Suttas* emphasise that no thought 'I will emerge' immediately leads up to emergence from the state, but that this occurs simply because the mind of the meditator has been 'previously so developed' (M.I. 302). For the Theravāda, Buddhaghosa explains that emergence occurs due to the intention made before cessation was

entered. Cessation then lasts for a pre-determined time unless interrupted by death, the call of the monastic community, or of a person's teacher.

Now in Buddhist *Abhidhamma* theory, mental states only lasts for a micro-moment before decaying and being replaced by other mental-states. Physical states last for slightly longer moments. If this is so, it would seem that the only way an intention can effect a future event is if it sets in train a causal chain culminating in that event, During cessation, the components of that chain can only be physical states. This implies that it is these which lead to the emergence. Griffiths sees this as an implication which the Theravāda does not want to embrace, due to its 'dualism', in which mental events are not seen to directly arise from physical ones (1986, p. 37). This overlooks the fact, though, that the Theravādin *Abhidhamma* does talk of a physical 'basis' for mentation-consciousness and mentation-element (see above). While normally these are *also* dependent on prior moments of the same type, 'cessation' is clearly not a normal-type state, and so may acceptably be seen as one in which the physical 'basis' alone, thanks to a prior intention, leads to the arising of mentation-consciousness and mentation-element, at emergence from the state. As even Griffiths admits, the Theravādins see at least one physical event—death—as leading to emergency from cessation. This is because *bhavanga*, a state of *citta*, occurs at the moment of death, so that cessation is no longer operative then. As to how the call of the community or a teacher ends cessation, this is not stated. It could be either through stimulating the body to re-start the mind, or perhaps a more direct 'mental' stimulation of the organism.

The Sarvāstivādin view of emergence from cessation is that it is directly produced by the last moment of mind before entering cessation. This is possible, in their view, because past, future and present *dharmas* all 'exist' in some sense. Thus A can directly affect B even if they are separated in time. The Sautrāntikas, on the other hand, held that the body alone leads to emergence from cessation, as it has been 'seeded' by prior moments of mind. The Yogācārins (a Mahāyāna school) hold that a form of residual consciousness remains in cessation. This is the 'store-consciousness' (*ālaya-vijñāna*), a concept in some ways similar to the *bhavanga citta* of the Theravādins.

Conclusion

Pāli Buddhism's overall understanding of the mind–body relationship is thus as follows:

i) There is a clear differentiation between *dhammas* which are intensional (part of *nāma*) and those which pertain to material form (*rūpa*).

ii) Nevertheless, not all *rūpa dhammas* can be sensed by a physical sense organ; some must be inferred or clairvoyantly known: thus *rūpa* does not refer simply to that-which-is-(physically)-sensed, as some have held (Johansson, 1979, p. 34).

iii) While *nāma* is centred on *citta* and *rūpa* is centred on the 'four great elements', there is no dualism of a mental 'substance' versus a physical 'substance': both *nāma* and *rūpa* each refer to clusters of changing, interacting processes.

vi) The processes of *nāma* and *rūpa* also interact with each other, from the moment of conception, mutually supporting each other.

v) For a life to begin, there must be the coming together, in the womb, of

appropriate physical conditions and a flow of consciousnss from a previous life.

vi) Life continues while there is 'vitality, heat and consciousness' in a person, these comprising a conditioned, empirical life-principle that is neither identical with nor entirely different from the mortal body, but is (normally) dependent on and bound to such a body.

vii) In the normal situation, mental processes are affected by physical ones in that the physical sense enables there to be types of consciousness that would not otherwise exist (the five sense-consciousnesses), and give specific kinds of input-content to the mind; the physical mind-basis also support the occurrence of mentation (that which is aware of mental objects) and mentation-consciousness.

viii) In the normal situation, certain mental processes also lead to the origination of certain types of physical processes (which are also dependent on other physical processes), and some of these (mind-originated motion- and solidity-elements), in turn, may be modulated by mental processes so as to lead to specific bodily movements or vocal articulations.

ix) Death leads to the break-up of the normal mind–body interaction, such that consciousness, and certain accompaniments, flow on to another life.

x) Four of the many forms of rebirth are anomalous in that they remain totally free of physical form: but when there is thus *nāma* unaccompanied by *rūpa*, *nāma* itself occurs in a different way from normal. The mind cannot be simply separated from the body without it undergoing change.

xi) Another anomalous state is that of 'cessation', where there is temporarily a living body and yet no consciousness whatsoever. Again, when *nāma* restarts after cessation, it does so in a new way, with a deeper level of insight. A plausible route for the restarting of mental processes is the physical mind-basis.

xii) Other non-normal patterns of interaction between mind and body are found in the cases of development of the 'mind-made' body and the exercise of psychic powers. As in the cases of the formless rebirths and cessation, these non-normal cases are dependent on the power of meditation to bring about transformations in the normal pattern of *nāma–rūpa* interaction.

The 'mind–body' relationship, then, is seen as a pattern of interaction between two types of processes. The interactions which take place between these two sets of processes are part of an overall network of interactions which also include mental–mental and physical–physical interactions. Neither the two sets, or the processes they comprise, are independent substances, for they are streams of momentary events which could not occur without the interactions which condition their arising. Meditation has the power to alter the usual patterns of interaction into non-normal configurations, which accordingly affect the type of process-events that arise.

As I have argued elsewhere, however, the Pāli *Suttas* (though not later Pāli material) includes indications that the early Buddhists regarded consciousness (*viññāna*) as able to 'break free' of the network of interactions (Harvey, 1989; 1990, pp. 61–68, 58). Indeed, the *Suttas* often see personality as a vortex of interaction not between *nāma* (including consciousness) and *rūpa*, but between consciousness and *nāma–rūpa* (D. II. 32, 63–4, S. III. 9–10). By turning away from all objects, seen as ephemeral and worthless, consciousness could become objectless. 'It' would then not be a limited,

conditioned process, but the unconditioned: *Nibbāna*. Unlike the situation of cessation, this would not be the complete absence of consciousness, but the timeless experience of a 'consciousness' which had transcended itself by dropping all objects.

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ABBREVIATIONS

References are to the Pali Text Society's editions, except in the case of Ptn., where reference is to the Pali Publication Board's edition.

A.   *Aṅguttara Nikāya:* part of the Canonical *Sutta* collection.
Asl.   *Aṭṭhasālinī:* Buddhaghosa's commentary on Dhs. (qv.).
CR.   *Conditional Relations,* U. Nārada's translation of Ptn.
D.   *Dīgha Nikāya:* part of the Canonical *Sutta* collection.
Dhp.   *Dhammapada:* part of the Canonical *Sutta* collection.
Dhs.   *Dhamma-saṅgaṇi:* part of the Canonical *Abhidhamma.*
M.   *Majjhima Nikāya:* part of the Canonical *Sutta* collection.
Pati.   *Paṭisambhidāmagga:* part of the Canonical *Sutta* collection.
Ptn.   *Paṭṭhāna:* part of the Canonical *Abhidhamma.*
S.   *Saṃyutta Nikāya:* part of the Canonical *Sutta* collection.
Thag. *Theragāthā:* part of the Canonical *Sutta* collection.
Vibh. *Vibhanga:* part of the Canonical *Abhidhamma.*
Vism. *Visuddhimagga* of Buddhaghosa.

Cessation and Integration in Classical Yoga

IAN WHICHER

ABSTRACT   In this paper I challenge and attempt to correct conclusions about Classical Yoga philosophy drawn by traditional and modern interpretations of Patañjali's Yoga-sūtras. My interpretation of Patañjali's Yoga—which focuses on the meaning of "cessation" (nirodha) as given in Patañjali's central definition of Yoga (YS 1.2)—counters the radically dualistic and ontologically-oriented interpretations of Yoga presented by many scholars, and offers an open-ended, epistemologically-oriented hermeneutic which, I maintain, is more appropriate for arriving at a genuine assessment of Patañjali's system (darśana) of Yoga.

What is Yoga philosophy and how can it enrich our understanding of human nature? What is the relationship between self-understanding, morality and spiritual emancipation in Yoga thought? As a response to these questions, my paper will explore, within the Hindu tradition, Patañjali's (c third century CE) authoritative system (darśana) of Classical Yoga—a philosophical perspective which has, I submit, far too often been looked upon as excessively spiritual to the point of being a world-denying philosophy, indifferent to moral endeavour, neglecting the world of nature and culture, and overlooking human reality, vitality and creativity.

Contrary to the arguments presented by many scholars, which associate Yoga exclusively with extreme asceticism, mortification, denial and the renunciation and extrication of material existence (prakṛti) in favour of disembodied liberation—an elevated and isolated spiritual state (puruṣa)—I will argue that Patañjali's Yoga can be seen as a responsible engagement, in various ways, of spirit (puruṣa = Self, pure consciousness) and matter (prakṛti = mind, body, nature) resulting in a highly developed and transformed human nature, an integrated and embodied state of liberated selfhood (jīvanmukti). In support of the above thesis, textual evidence has been drawn from the two main authoritative sources of Classical Yoga: the Yoga-Sūtras (YS) of Patañjali and the Vyāsa-Bhāṣya (VB) of Vyāsa (c 500–600 CE). [1]

Cessation (Nirodha): Transformation or Negation of the Mind?

In Patañjali's central definition of Yoga, Yoga is defined "as the cessation of [the misidentification with] the modifications (vṛtti) of the mind (citta)". [2] 'Nirodha' ('cessation') is one of the most difficult terms employed in the YS and its meaning plays a crucial role for a proper comprehension of Patañjali's system of Yoga. The 'attainment' of liberation is based on the progressive purification of mind (sattvaśuddhi) and the increasing light of knowledge (jñāna) that takes place in the process of nirodha. Since, as I shall now argue, the misunderstanding of this process has been fundamental to the misapprehension of the meaning of Patañjali's Yoga, there is a need to clarify it.

The word 'nirodha' is derived from ni: ('down, into') and rudh: 'to obstruct, arrest, stop, restrain, prevent'. [3] In some well-known translations of YS 1.2, nirodha has been

rendered as 'suppression', [4] 'inhibition', [5] 'restriction', [6] 'cessation', [7] and 'restraint'. [8] These meanings, I submit, are highly problematic, erroneous or misleading if understood, as many scholars understand them, with a view which emphasises *nirodha* as an ontological negation or dissolution of the mind and its functioning. I suggest that any attempt to interpret Patañjali's Yoga as a practice which seeks to annihilate or suppress the mind and its modifications for the purpose of gaining liberation grossly distorts the intended meaning of Yoga as defined by Patañjali. In regard to the process of *nirodha*, the wide range of methods in the YS indicates an emphasis on the ongoing application of yogic techniques, not a deadening of the mental faculties wherein the operations of consciousness, including our perceptual and ethical natures, are switched off. By defining *nirodha* as 'cessation', I mean to imply the 'undoing' of the conjunction (*samyoga*) between *puruṣa*, the 'Seer' (*draṣṭṛ*) and *prakṛti*, the 'seeable' (*dṛśya*), the conjunction which Vyāsa explains as a mental superimposition (*adhyāropa*), [9] resulting in the confusion of identity between *puruṣa* and the mental processes. Our intrinsic nature as *puruṣa* becomes *as if* misidentified with the mental processes (*vṛtti*) thereby creating, in the words of Vyāsa, "a mental self born of delusion". [10] *Nirodha*, I suggest, refers to the cessation of the worldly, empirical effects of the *vṛttis* on the *yogin's* consciousness, not the complete cessation of *vṛttis* themselves. *Nirodha* means to cease the congenital, epistemological power of the *vṛttis* over the *yogin*, i.e. *nirodha* is the epistemological cessation of *vṛttis* in the form of the congenital ignorance (*avidyā*) of our true spiritual identity and ultimate destiny. [11]

One will naturally ask how practitioners who attempt to obey any teachings resulting in death to their minds would have the capacity to comprehend or carry out any further instructions. Perhaps, more importantly, how could one function practically as a human being without the faculties of thinking, memory, discrimination and reason, and an individual I-sense with which one can distinguish oneself from other people and the world? Surely such a person would have to be mad or unconscious. If all the great Yoga masters of the past had obliterated or so thoroughly suppressed their minds in order to become liberated, how did they speak, teach, reason, remember, empathize, or even use the word 'I'? The mind and the body are the only vehicles in which to attain liberation. It is the mind, as Yoga readily admits, that must be utilised to study and listen to the guru; it is the mind that is needed to follow a spiritual path to liberation; and it is equally the mind that is required by the aspirant in order to function as a human being in day-to-day life.

By advising or explaining that the mind and its various faculties are to be negated, suppressed or abolished, many scholars, teachers and writers on Yoga have, I maintain, missed the point of practising Yoga. For it is not the *mind*, but rather the exclusive identification with material existence as one's true Self which is the source of all human difficulties and dissatisfaction (*duḥkha*); it is a specific state of consciousness or cognitive error evidenced *in* the mind and not the mind *itself*, which is at issue. Misidentification refers to the process wherein our self-identity conforms (*sārūpya*) to the changing nature of *vṛtti*. [12] *Avidyā*—the root affliction (*kleśa*) in Yoga which gives rise to four other afflictions: I-am-ness/egoity (*asmitā*), attachment (*rāga*), aversion (*dveṣa*) and the desire for continuity or fear of death (*abhiniveśa*) [13]—is a positive misconstruction of reality which mistakes *puruṣa* for prakṛtic existence. It is the condition of misidentification—the saṃsāric condition of self and world—and not the mind in total which must be eradicated in Yoga. Any advice to destroy the mind is, it seems to me, detrimental to a human being and to the practice of Yoga. How could progress on the path of Yoga be made with such an approach? What would the ethical

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ramifications be? The belief that mental annihilation leads to spiritual liberation has become a popular and unfortunate teaching of modern interpretations of Yoga. Despite the fact that it is neither truly yogic, practical, logical, nor appealing and, furthermore, may be destructive for aspirants, recent teachings and works on Yoga have often prescribed the negation or suppression of the mind, ego and thoughts as the primary means to self-emancipation. [14] This stance, I submit, is a gross misrepresentation of Yoga; a confused, misleading and, at best, naïve attempt at conveying the depth and profundity of the practice termed by Patañjali as *nirodha*.

It is my contention that *nirodha* denotes an epistemological emphasis and refers to the transformation of self-understanding, not the ontological cessation of *prakṛti* (i.e. the mind and *vṛttis*). *Nirodha* thus is not, as some have explained, an inward movement that annihilates or suppresses *vṛttis* or thoughts, nor is it the non-existence or absence of *vṛtti*; rather, *nirodha* involves a progressive expansion of perception which eventually reveals our true identity as *puruṣa*. Elsewhere, [15] I have argued that *cittavṛtti* describes the very basis of all the empirical selves: under the influence of *avidyā* the unenlightened person's mental processes (*vṛtti*) generate and are ineluctably driven by deeply rooted impressions (*saṃskāras*) and personality traits (*vāsanās*) sustaining an afflicted I-sense (*asmitā*). [16] Seen in the above context, *cittavṛtti* can be understood as a generic term standing for a misconceived knowledge (*viparyaya-jñāna*)[17] or error, which is structured in the network of our psychological make-up and veils our identity as *puruṣa*. The epistemic distortion or erroneous knowledge (*mithyā-jñāna*) [18] functioning as the *vṛtti* of *viparyaya* acts as the basis for all misidentification with *vṛttis* in the unenlightened mode (*vyutthāna*) of being. [19] In short, our afflicted identity rooted in spiritual ignorance functions through *viparyaya*. Oddly enough, this fundamental insight, which can be attributed to Vyāsa, [20] has not been clearly noted by scholars. I have attempted to clarify Vyāsa's position and furthermore suggest that this insight into the nature of *viparyaya* has profound implications for our understanding of Patañjali's whole system.

Accordingly, *cittavṛtti* does not stand for all cognitions or emotive processes in the mind but is the very seed (*bīja*) mechanism of *puruṣa*'s misidentification with *prakṛti* and from which all other *vṛttis* or thoughts arise and are appropriated in the unenlightened state of mind. Spiritual ignorance gives rise to a malfunctioning of *vṛtti* which in Yoga can be corrected, thereby allowing for the 'right' functioning of *vṛtti*. [21] *Cittavṛtti* is an analogical understanding of consciousness in that the consciousness which has become the mind is analogous to *puruṣa*'s consciousness. [22] It is the *cittavṛtti* as our confused and mistaken identity of *puruṣa*, not our *vṛttis*, thoughts and experiences *in total* which must be brought to a state of definitive cessation.

Aloneness *(Kaivalya)* and Integration

I would now like to contend that in Yoga the state of liberation or 'aloneness' (*kaivalya*) in no way destroys or negates the personality of the *yogin*. Rather, *kaivalya* can be seen as a state in which all the obstacles preventing an immanent and purified relationship or engagement of person and spirit (*puruṣa*) have been removed. The mind, which previously functioned under the sway of ignorance colouring and blocking our perception of authentic identity, has now become purified and no longer operates as a locus of misidentification and dissatisfaction (*duḥkha*). *Sattva*, the finest quality (*guṇa*) of the mind, has the capacity to be perfectly lucid/transparent, like a dust-free mirror in which the light of *puruṣa* is clearly reflected and the discriminative discernment (*vivekakhyāti*)

[23] between *puruṣa* and the mind can take place. [24] The crucial point to be made here is that *prakṛti* ceases to perform an obstructing role in *kaivalya*. The mind has been transformed, liberated from the egocentric world of attachment, its former afflicted nature abolished; and *puruṣa*, left alone, is never again confused with all the relational acts, intentions and volitions of empirical existence. There being no power of misidentification remaining (i.e. in *nirbīja-samādhi*), [25] the mind can no longer operate within the context of the afflictions, impressions, *karmas* and consequent cycles of *saṃsāra* implying a mistaken identity of selfhood subject to birth and death.

The *YS* has often been regarded as promoting the severance of *puruṣa* from *prakṛti*; concepts such as liberation, cessation, detachment, etc., have been interpreted in an explicitly negative light. Max Müller, citing Bhoja Rāja's commentary (11th century CE), refers to Yoga as 'separation' (*viyoga*). [26] More recently, numerous other scholars, including Eliade, Koelman, Feuerstein and Larson, have endorsed this interpretation, i.e. the absolute separateness of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. [27] In asserting the absolute separation of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, scholars and non-scholars alike have tended to disregard the possibility for other fresh hermeneutical options and this has surely proved detrimental to Patañjali's Yoga by continuing a tradition based on a misreading of the *Yoga-Sūtras* and Vyāsa's commentary. Accordingly, the absolute separation of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* can only be interpreted as a disembodied state implying death to the physical body. Yet, interestingly, *YS* 2.9 states that even the wise possess the 'desire for continuity' in life. What *is* involved in Yoga is the death of the egoic identity which generates notions of one being a subject trapped in a particular body–mind.

Yoga is a practical way of life implying physical training, exertion of will power and acts of decision because Yoga deals with the complete human situation and provides real freedom, not just a theory of liberation. To this end, Patañjali outlined an 'eight-limbed' path (*aṣṭāṅga-yoga*) dealing with the physical, moral, psychological and spiritual dimensions of the *yogin*, an integral path which emphasises organic continuity, balance and integration [28] in contrast to the discontinuity, imbalance and disintegration inherent in *saṃyoga*. The idea of cosmic balance and of the mutual support and upholding of the various parts of nature and society is not foreign to Yoga thought. Vyāsa deals with the theory of 'nine causes' or types of causation according to tradition. [29] The ninth type of cause is termed *dhṛti*, meaning 'support', 'sustenance'. Based on Vyāsa's explanation of *dhṛti* we can see how mutuality and sustenance are understood as essential conditions for the maintenance of the natural and social world. There is an organic interdependence of all living entities wherein all (i.e. the elements, animals, humans and divine bodies) work together for the 'good' of the whole and for each other. At this point I would like to emphasise a much overlooked aspect of Yoga thought. Far from being exclusively a subjectively-oriented and introverted path of withdrawal from life, classical Yoga acknowledges the intrinsic value of 'support' and 'sustenance' and the interdependence of all living entities, thus upholding organic continuity, balance and integration within the natural and social world. Having attained to that insight (*prajñā*) which is 'truth-bearing' (*ṛtam-bharā*), [30] the *yogin* perceives the natural order of cosmic life, 'unites' with and embodies that order. To be ensconced in ignorance implies a disunion with the natural order of life.

In contradistinction to the above interpretation of Yoga as 'separation', I am suggesting that far from being incompatible principles, *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* can engage or participate in harmony, having attained a balance or equilibrium together. The enstatic consciousness of *puruṣa* can co-exist with the mind and indeed all of *prakṛti*. [31] The *yogin* fully reconciles the eternally unchanging Seer with the eternally changing realm of

relative states of consciousness only by allowing the mind in the practice of *samādhi* to dwell in its pure sattvic nature in the 'image of *puruṣa*', and then to be engaged once again in the field of relative existence. The process of *nirodha* culminates in *asamprajñāta-samādhi*, [32] the supra-cognitive awareness where the Seer abides in its own form. [33] According to Vyāsa, the repeated practice of the temporary 'experiences' of enstasy gradually matures the *yogin's* consciousness into *kaivalya*, permanent liberation. The stability of the consciousness in *kaivalya* should not be misconstrued as being sheer inactivity, pacifism or lethargy; rather, stability in *samādhi* allows for a harmony in activity, where the *guṇas* do not conflict with each other and are attuned to *puruṣa*. One is no longer in conflict with oneself and the world. We need not read Patañjali as saying that the culmination of all yogic endeavour, *kaivalya*, is a static finality or inactive, isolated, solipsistic state of being. In fact, *YS* 4.34 tells us that *kaivalya* has as its foundation the very heart of the unlimited dynamism or power of consciousness (*citiśakti*) that *is puruṣa*. [34] In terms of our primary analogue of empirical life (*cittavṛtti*), *puruṣa* is not seen to be active. In terms of *puruṣa's* inexhaustibility, *puruṣa* is supremely active. To conclude that *puruṣa* is incapable of any activity whatsoever simply amounts to a tautological statement. In the liberated condition, it can be said that *prakṛti* is so integrated in the *yogin's* consciousness that it has become 'one' with the *yogin*. *Kaivalya* incorporates a perfectly integrated psychological consciousness and the independence of pure consciousness, yet pure consciousness to which the realm of the *guṇas* is completely attuned and integrated. Through the consummate phase of supra-cognitive *samādhi*, in *dharma-megha* ('cloud of *dharma*'), a permanent identity shift—from the perspective of the human personality to *puruṣa*—takes place. No longer dependent on knowledge (*vṛtti*) and fully detached from the world of misidentification, the *yogin* yet retains the power of discernment, omniscience [35] and activity. [36] The autotransparent knower, knowledge and action co-exist in a state of mutual attunement.

The culmination of the Yoga system is found when, following from *dharma-megha samādhi*, [37] the mind and action are freed from misidentification and affliction [38] and one is no longer deluded regarding one's true identity. At this phase of practice one is disconnected from all patterns of egoically-motivated action. The *karma* of such an adept is said to be neither 'pure', nor 'impure', nor 'mixed'. [39] Though transcending the normative conventions and obligations of karmic behaviour, the *yogin* acts morally not as an extrinsic response and out of obedience to an external moral code of conduct, but as an intrinsic response and as a matter of natural, purified inclination. The stainless luminosity of *puruṣa* is revealed as one's fundamental nature; the *yogin* does not act samsarically and is wholly detached from the egoic fruits of action. The yogin does not, for example, indulge in the fruits of ritual action, in the merit (*puṇya*) and demerit (*apuṇya*) generated by good and bad observance of traditional ritualistic religion. By the practice of a detached ethic, the yogin must transcend this ritualistic, self-centred mentality. This does not imply that the *yogin* loses all orientation for action. Detachment, in its highest form (*para-vairāgya*), [40] is defined by Vyāsa as a 'clarity of knowledge' (*jñāna-prasāda*). [41] Only attachment (and compulsive desire), not action itself, sets in motion the law of moral causation (*karma*) by which a person is implicated in *samsāra*. The *yogin* is said to be neither attached to virtue nor non-virtue, is no longer oriented within the egological patterns of thought as in *samyoga*. This does not mean, as some scholars have misleadingly concluded, that the spiritual adept is free to commit immoral acts, [42] or that the *yogin* is motivated by selfish concerns. [43] Acts must not only be performed in the spirit of unselfishness (i.e. sacrifice), or

non-attachment, they must also be morally sound and justifiable. If action depended solely on one's frame of mind, it would be the best excuse for immoral behaviour. Moreover, the *yogin's* spiritual journey—far from being, as Feuerstein describes it, [44] an "a-moral process"—is a highly moral process! The *yogin's* commitment to the sattvification of consciousness, including the cultivation of moral virtues such as compassion *(karuṇā)* [45] and non-harming *(ahiṃsā)* [46] is not an 'a-moral' enterprise, nor is it an expression of indifference, aloofness or an uncaring attitude to others. Moral disciplines are engaged as a natural outgrowth of intelligent self-understanding and commitment to self-transcendence which takes consciousness out of (ec-stasis) its identification with the rigid structure of the monadic ego, thereby reversing the inveterate tendency of this ego to innate itself at the expense of its responsibility in relation to others.

Having defined the 'goal' of Yoga as 'aloneness' *(kaivalya)*, the question must now be asked: what kind of 'aloneness' was Patañjali talking about? 'Aloneness', I submit, is not the isolation of the Seer *(puruṣa)* separate from the seeable *(prakṛti)*, as is unfortunately far too often maintained as the goal of Yoga, but refers to the aloneness of the power of 'seeing' [47] in its innate purity and clarity without any epistemological distortion or moral defilement. The cultivation of *nirodha* uproots the compulsive tendency to reify the world and oneself (i.e. that pervading sense of separate ego irrevocably divided from the encompassing world) with an awareness which reveals the transcendent, yet immanent, Seer. *Puruṣa* is said to be 'alone' not because there is an opposition or a separation, but simply because there is no misconception of *puruṣa's* identity. Yoga is not, as one scholar would have us think, a Cartesian-like dichotomy (of thinker and thing). [48] Nor can Yoga be described as a metaphysical union of an individuated self with the objective world of nature or more subtle realms of *prakṛti*. More appropriately, Yoga can be seen to unfold states of epistemic oneness *(samādhi)*—the non-separation of knower, knowing and known [49]—grounding our identity in a non-afflicted mode of action. As *puruṣa* is self-luminous, in *kaivalya* 'puruṣa stands alone in its true nature as pure light'. [50] *Puruṣa* no longer needs to know itself reflexively, is peaceful and immutable because it needs/lacks nothing. *Kaivalya* implies a power of 'seeing' in which the dualisms rooted in our egocentric patterns of attachment, aversion, etc., have been transformed into unselfish ways of being with others. [51] 'Seeing' is not only a cognitive term but implies purity of mind, i.e. it has moral content and value. *Kaivalya* does not destroy feeling or encourage neglect or indifference. On the contrary, the process of cessation *(nirodha)* steadies one for a life of compassion and discernment and is informed by a 'seeing' in touch with the needs of others.

Yoga goes beyond the position of classical Sāṃkhya which seems to rest content with a discriminating knowledge *(viveka)* leading to an absolute separation between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. At the end of the day, *prakṛti's* alignment with the purpose of *puruṣa* appears to be all for nought. Yet, if *puruṣa* were completely free to start with, why would it get 'involved' with *prakṛti*? *Puruṣa's* 'entanglement' does intelligise *prakṛti* which on its own is devoid of consciousness. [52] The end product of puruṣa's 'involvement' with *prakṛti*, the state of liberated omniscience, is enriching and allows for a verifying and enlivening of human nature/consciousness. Classical Sāṃkhya's adherence to an absolute separation, implying a final unworkable duality between spirit and matter, amounts to an impoverishment of ideas. In Yoga, however, knowledge can be utilised in the integrity of action and being. Thus, Vyāsa states that the knower is liberated while still alive *(jīvanmukta)*. [53] The *puruṣa* is 'alone' not because it is a windowless monad but because it transcends the faulty mechanics of *saṃyoga*, is unaffected by the *guṇas* and *karma*.

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Can *puruṣa*'s existence embrace states of action and knowledge, person and personality? The tradition of Yoga answers in the affirmative. Vyāsa asserts that having attained a state of perfection beyond sorrow, "the omniscient *yogin* whose afflictions and bondage have been destroyed disports himself [herself] as a master". [54] The enstatic consciousness and pure reflection of the *sattva* of the mind 'merge' in *kaivalya*, [55] resulting in a natural attunement of mind and body in relation to *puruṣa*. The karmic power of *prakṛti* ceases to have a hold over the *yogin*, the karmic ego having been exploded.

The *yogin's* attention is no longer sucked into the vortex of the conflicting opposites (*dvandvas*) in *saṃsāra*, is no longer embroiled in the polarising intentionalities of desire: the vectors of attraction and aversion. Free from the egoic intrusions of worldly existence, the *yogin* is said to be left 'alone'. The *puruṣa* can express itself in the time–space continuum in a particular body and with a particular personality. Yoga does not deny the existence of individuality; it allows for a trans-egoic development which is not the dissolution of the individual person and its personality but, rather, which includes their extension into the recognition, moral integrity and celebration of the interconnectedness of all beings, all life. Enstasy (*kaivalya*) is lived simultaneously with the mind or 'consciousness-of'. The link between the enstatic consciousness and the world is the purified *sattva* of the mind.

We must question assertions to the effect that, having attained liberation, the psychical apparatus of the *yogin* is destroyed, [56] or that the *yogin's* body lives on in a state of catalepsy until death. [57] What disappears for the *yogin* is the 'failure to see' (*adarśana*), [58] or the world-view born of *avidyā*, not *prakṛti* itself. The purified mind and the evolutes of *prakṛti* (e.g. intellect, ego) can now be used as vehicles for an enlightened life of interaction and service, such as imparting knowledge to others: the purity and cognitive power impersonated in the guru is transformed from an end into an available means. When one accomplished in Yoga opens one's eyes to the world of experience, the knower (*puruṣa*) will be one's true centre of existence. The *guṇas* (i.e. *vṛttis*) will be subordinate to the knower. [59] Once the final stage of emancipation is reached, the lower levels of insight previously gained are incorporated, not destroyed. Only *puruṣa*'s misidentifications with phenomena are ended. When it is said that one has realised *puruṣa* through *nirodha*, it is meant that there is no further level to experience for one's liberation. *Nirodha* does not indicate the denial of formed reality or the negation of relative states of consciousness. Nor is it rooted in a conception of oneself which abstracts from one's identity as a social, historical and embodied being. *Nirodha* refers to the expansion of understanding necessary to perceive every dimension of reality from the direct perspective of pure, untainted consciousness.

If Patañjali had destroyed his perception of forms and differences, how could he have had such insight into Yoga and the intricacies of the unenlightened state? If through *nirodha*, the individual form and the whole world had been cancelled for Patañjali, he would more likely have spent the rest of his days in the inactivity and isolation of transcendent oblivion rather than presenting Yoga philosophy to others! Rather than being handicapped by the exclusion of thinking, perceiving or experiencing, one can say that the liberated *yogin* actualises the potential to live a fully integrated life in the world. The *yogin* simultaneously lives as it were in two worlds: the dimension of unqualified (*nirguṇa*) existence and the relative dimension (*saguṇa*), yet two worlds which work together as one. I conclude here that there is no reason why the liberated *yogin* cannot be portrayed as a vital, creative, thinking, balanced, happy and wise person. Having

adopted an integrative orientation to life, the enlightened being can endeavour to transform, enrich and ennoble the world. I am therefore suggesting that there is a rich affective, moral, cognitive and spiritual potential inherent in the realization of *puruṣa*, the 'aloneness' of the 'power of consciousness'.

Concluding Remarks

Although many valuable contemporary scholarly writings on Yoga have helped to present Patañjali's philosophy to a wider academic audience, it is my contention that Patañjali has far too often been misinterpreted or misrepresented thanks to the use of inappropriate methodology: partial and misleading definitions of Sanskrit yogic terms and reductionistic hermeneutics. Many scholars have repeatedly given ontological definitions and explanations for terms which, I maintain, are more appropriately understood with an epistemological emphasis. Consequently, the specialised sense inherent in Yoga soteriology is diminished. The soteriological intent of Yoga need not preclude the possibility for an integrated, embodied state of liberated selfhood. A bias is invariably created within the language encountered in the translations and interpretations of the *YS*, resulting in an overemphasis on content, due consideration not having been given to form, structure and function. It is crucial to study the process of Yoga contextually, as it is lived and experienced by the *yogin*, and not simply to impute a content-system to the whole process. The bias extends to the ontological priorities of *puruṣa* over *prakṛti* and by consequence the priority of axiology over epistemology. *Puruṣa* is generally explained as the enlightened and ultimately hegemonic principle of pure consciousness, our true identity which alone has intrinsic spiritual value. *Prakṛti*, we are often told, is the non-spiritual cosmogonic principle comprised of the three *guṇas* (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*), has a deluding, binding yet paradoxically subservient nature, and eventually disappears from the *yogin's* purview thus having no real value in the liberated state. It is not clear that the language of the *YS* is explanatory. It could equally be descriptive, in which case the axiological and ontological priorities would collapse, thereby challenging the widely held view that the relationship between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* is exclusively an asymmetrical one, i.e. *prakṛti* exists for the purpose of *puruṣa*, and its value is seen only in instumental terms and within the context of a soteriological end state which excludes it.

In Patañjali's central definition of Yoga (*YS* 1.2) *nirodha* has far too often been understood as an ontological cessation, suppression or 'deadening' of the mind and this misunderstanding has led, I submit, to some major interpretive errors. First, one can witness a reductionistic application of positivistic presuppositions to a mystical system: scholars have often concluded that once the stage of liberation has been attained the *yogin* will no longer be capable of experiencing the world since the body–mind has ceased to function. Second, the oral/historical teaching tradition has either been ignored or else this important pedagogical context of Yoga has not been sufficiently taken into consideration. Our hermeneutics must include a way of reading the tradition of Yoga within the culture we are studying. Third, by understanding *nirodha* to mean the ontological cessation or negation of *vṛttis*, many scholars have given a negative, one-sided and spurious definition of Yoga. The result is a volatile concept of *nirodha* that is world-denying and mind-and-body negating, wherein phenomenal reality is dissolved into nothingness or a meaningless existence for the liberated *yogin*. Consequently, Patañjali's philosophy as a whole becomes trivialised and can be viewed as impractical, unapproachable, unintelligible and unattractive.

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Puruṣa indeed has precedence over *prakṛti* in Patañjali's system, for *puruṣa* is what is ordinarily 'missing' in human life and is ultimately the consciousness one must awaken to. According to this study, liberation as 'aloneness' (*kaivalya*) need not denote an ontological superiority of *puruṣa*, nor an exclusion of *prakṛti*. *Kaivalya*, I have argued, can be positively construed as an integration of both principles—an integration which, I maintain, is what is most important for Yoga. To break *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* apart, keep one and try to discard the other, is an enterprise which creates psychological and social conflict involving confused notions of 'self' which, I submit, are, clearly inimical to Yoga. Such notions may have an aversion-orientation (*dveṣa*), [60] e.g. an exaggerated (and impoverished) sense of 'isolation' from the world as in the flight or escape of self with an impulse towards self-negation; or such notions may have an attachment-orientation (*rāga*), [61] e.g. whereby we only succumb to the world and can easily become enmeshed in forms of narcissism and egocentrism by aggressively objectifying and exploiting the world. Both of these extremes—escape from the world and worldly entrapment—must be transcended in Yoga. I have proposed that the *YS* does not uphold a path of liberation which ultimately renders *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* incapable of 'cooperating' together. Rather, the *YS* seeks to 'unite' these two principles, to bring them 'together' in a state of balance, harmony and a fullness of knowledge in the integrity of being and action.

Thus, Patañjali's Yoga need not result in the extinction or the evaporation of our 'personhood' along with the material world; rather, it is more accurate to say that Yoga culminates in the eradication of spiritual ignorance, the root cause of our misidentification with, and attachment to, worldly (or otherworldly!) existence. In this way, Yoga removes our selfishness and suffering (*duḥkha*) rooted in an afflicted and mistaken self-identity (*asmitā*). Liberated from the pain of self-limitation and all destructive personality traits, and having incorporated an expanded and enriched sense of personal identity embodying virtues such as non-violence, compassion and wisdom, the *yogin* can dwell in a state of balance and fulfilment, serving others while feeling truly at home in the world. The *yogin* can function in relation to the world, not being morally or epistemologically enslaved by worldly relationship. Morality and perception are both essential channels through which human consciousness, far from being negated or suppressed, is transformed and illuminated. Yoga combines discerning knowledge with an emotional, affective and moral sensibility. The enhanced perception gained through Yoga must be interwoven with Yoga's rich affective and moral dimensions to form a spirituality that does not become entangled in a web of antinomianism, but which retains the integrity and vitality to transmute our lives effectively. By upholding an integration of the moral and the mystical, Yoga supports a reconciliation of the prevalent tension within Hinduism between spiritual engagement and self-identity within the world (*pravṛtti*), and spiritual disengagement from worldliness and self-identity which transcends the world (*nivṛtti*). Yoga teaches a balance between these two apparently conflicting orientations.

This paper has been an attempt to counter the radically dualistic and ontologically-oriented interpretations of Yoga given by many scholars—where the full potentialities of our human embodiment are constrained within the rigid metaphysical structure of classical Sāṃkhya—and to offer instead an open-ended, morally and epistemologically-oriented hermeneutic which frees classical Yoga of the long standing conception of spiritual isolation, disembodiment, self-denial and world-negation and thus from its pessimistic image. I have elsewhere suggested that Patañjali can be understood as having adopted a provisional, practical, dualistic metaphysics but that there is no proof his system ends in duality. [62]

Patañjali's *YS* has to this day remained one of the most influential spiritual guides in Hinduism. In addition to a large number of people in India, hundreds of thousands of Westerners are actively practising some form of Yoga influenced by Patañjali's thought, clearly demonstrating Yoga's relevance for today as a discipline which can transcend cultural, religious and philosophical barriers. The universal and universalising potential of Yoga makes it one of India's finest contributions to our modern and postmodern struggle for self-definition, moral integrity and spiritual renewal. The purpose of this present study has been to consider a fresh approach with which to re-examine and assess classical Yoga philosophy. There is, I submit, nothing in what I have argued which can be proven to be incompatible with Patañjali's thought. Thus, it is my hope that some of the suggestions made in this paper can function as a catalyst for bringing Patañjali's Yoga into a more fruitful dialogue and encounter with other religious and philosophical traditions, both within and outside of India.

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NOTES

[1] Because of obvious limitations of space, this paper can only present a summary of some of the main arguments given in an earlier, more thorough study which is presently being revised for publication. WHICHER, IAN R. (1992) 'A study of Patañjali's definitions of Yoga: uniting theory and practice in the Yoga-Sūtras, PhD thesis, Cambridge University. I have not offered a critical analysis of Vyāsa's commentary for the purpose of trying to determine how far Vyāsa correctly explains the *YS*. Rather, the study draws upon the wealth of philosophical and experiential insight which the *VB* brings to aid our understanding of the *YS*. For the Sanskrit text of the *YS* and the *VB* I have used *Pātañjala-Yogasūtrāṇi*, edited by K. S. Āgāśe (1904) (Poona, Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Ser., 47). Unless otherwise specified, all translations are my own.

[2] *YS* 1.2, p. 4. The modifications or functions (*vṛtti*) of the mind are said to be fivefold, namely, 'valid cognition' (*pramāṇa*), 'error' (*viparyaya*), 'conceptualisation' (*vikalpa*), 'sleep' (*nidrā*) and 'memory' (*smṛti*) (*YS* 1.6), and are described as being 'afflicted' (*akliṣṭa*) or 'non-afflicted' (*akliṣṭa*) (*YS* 1.5). *Citta* is an umbrella term which incorporates 'intellect' (*buddhi*), 'sense of self' (*ahaṃkāra*) and 'lower mind' (*manas*), and can be viewed as the aggregate of the cognitive, conative and affective processes and functions (*vṛtti*) of phenomenal consciousness, i.e. it consists of a grasping, intentional and volitional consciousness.

[3] MONIER-WILLIAMS, SIR M. (1899) *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (Oxford, Oxford University Press) p. 884.

[4] ĀRANYA, SWĀMI HARIHARĀNANDA (1963) *Yoga Philosophy of Patañjali* (Calcutta, Calcutta University Press) p. 1; and DVIVEDI, M. N. (1930) *The Yoga-Sūtras of Patañjali* (Adyar, Madras, Theosophical Publishing House) p. 2.

[5] TAIMNI, I. K. (1961) *The Science of Yoga* (Wheaton, IL, The Theosophical Publishing House) p. 6; and LEGGETT, TREVOR (1990) *The Complete Commentary by Śaṅkara on the Yoga Sūtras* (London, Kegan Paul) p. 60.

[6] WOODS, J. H. (1914) *The Yoga System of Patañjali* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press) p. 8; KOELMAN, G. M. (1970) *Pātañjala Yoga: From Related Ego to Absolute Self* (Poona, Papal Athenaeum) p. 237; and FEUERSTEIN, GEORG (1979) *The Yoga-Sūtra of Patañjali: A New Translation and Commentary* (Folkstone, UK, Wm. Dawson) p. 26.

[7] LARSON G. L. & BHATTACHARYA, R. S. (Eds) (1987) *Sāṃkhya: A Dualist Tradition in Indian Philosophy*, Vol. 4 of *The Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press) p. 28; and VARENNE, JEAN (1976) *Yoga and the Hindu Tradition* (Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press) p. 87.

[8] TOLA, F. & DRAGONETTI, C. (1987) *The Yogasūtras of Patañjali, On Concentration of Mind* (Delhi,

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Motilal Banarsidass) p. 5; and CHAPPLE, CHRISTOPHER KEY & YOGI ANANDA VIRAJ (1990) *The Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali* (Delhi, Sri Satguru Publications) p. 33.

[9] *VB* 2.18, p. 84; on *saṃyoga* see *YS* 2, 17, p. 79.

[10] *VB* 2.6, p. 9646.

[11] *YS* 2.3–5, pp. 59–63.

[12] *YS* 1.4, p. 7.

[13] *YS* 2.3–9, pp. 59–65.

[14] See, for example, VIVEKĀNANDA, SWĀMI (1977) *The Complete Works of Swāmi Vivekānanda*, 8 Vols (Calcutta, Advaita Ashrama), e.g. vol. 2, pp. 255–256 and vol. 8, p. 48, which takes a very negative approach to the mind. In an otherwise excellent book, Varenne, op. cit., note 7, appears to support a mind-negative approach to Yoga and qualifies a statement by adding "...the *chitta*, whose activity ... yoga makes it an aim to destroy..." (p. 114).

[15] WHICHER, op. cit., notes, chapter four.

[16] See for example *VB* 1.5, p. 10; *YS* 2.15, p. 74. 4.9, p. 181; and *YS* 4.8, p. 180, 4.24, 199.

[17] *VB* 2.24, p. 95.

[18] *YS* 1.8, p. 12.

[19] *YS* 3.9, p. 122.

[20] *VB* 1.8, p. 13.

[21] WHICHER, op. cit., note 1, chapter four.

[22] For a deeper analysis of this analogical understanding of consciousness see WHICHER, op. cit., note 1, chapter 3.

[23] *YS* 2.26, p. 96.

[24] *YS* 3.49, p. 167.

[25] *YS* 1.51, p. 54.

[26] MÜLLER, MAX (1899) *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* (London, Longmans, Green and Co.) p. 309.

[27] ELIADE, MIRCEA (1969) *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press); KOELMAN, op. cit., note 6; FEUERSTEIN, op. cit., note 6; and LARSON, op. cit., note 7.

[28] *YS* 2.29, p. 98.

[29] *VB* 2.28, p.98.

[30] *YS* 1.48, p. 51.

[31] *YS* 3.54–55, p. 174.

[32] *VB* 1.18, pp. 21–22.

[33] *YS* 1.3, p. 7.

[34] *YS* 4.34, p. 207.

[35] *YS* 3.54, p. 174.

[36] *YS* 4.7, p. 180.

[37] *YS* 4.29, p. 202.

[38] *YS* 4.30, p. 202.

[39] *VB* 4.7, p. 180.

[40] *YS* 1.16, p. 19.

[41] *VB* 1.16, pp. 19–20.

[42] ZAEHNER, R. C. (1974) *Our Savage God* (London, Collins) pp. 97–98.

[43] SCHARFSTEIN, B.-A. (1974) *Mystical Experience* (Baltimore, MD, Penguin) pp. 131–132.

[44] FEUERSTEIN, op. cit., note 6, p. 81.

[45] *YS* 1.33, p. 38.

[46] *YS* 2.35, p. 107.

[47] *YS* 2.25, p. 96.

[48] FEUERSTEIN, GEORG (1980) *The Philosophy of Classical Yoga* (Manchester, Manchester University Press) p. 24.

[49] *YS* 1.41, p. 43.

[50] *VB* 3.55, p. 175.

[51] *YS* 1.33, p. 38.

[52] *YS* 4.19, p. 194.

[53] *VB* 4.30, p. 203.

[54] *VB* 3.49, p. 167.

[55] *YS* 3.55, p. 175.

[56] KOELMAN, op. cit., note 6, p. 249.

[57] FEUERSTEIN, op. cit., note 6, p. 142.
[58] *VB* 2.23, p. 91.
[59] *YS* 4.18, p. 193.
[60] *YS* 2.8, p. 65.
[61] *YS* 2.7, p. 64.
[62] WHICHER, op. cit., note 1, chapter 6.

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Indian Conceptions of Human Personality

KAREL WERNER

ABSTRACT *Western philosophical and psychological thinking lacks an accepted theory of human personality; it has produced conflicting and inadequate notions, such as the religious one of a soul, the vague concept of the 'mind' and biological theories basing their understanding of man on the functions of the nervous system, particularly the brain, or dealing with his mental dimension only in terms of behavioural patterns. This paper explores the notions of personality in Indian systems and finds that virtually all of them understand it, despite differing terminology, as a fluid complex of functions or living forces characterised by intrinsic intelligence and coordinated by a dynamic structural principle, operating on three levels of reality: phenomenal material, phenomenal immaterial and noumenal or absolute. One can say that the Indian tradition fully appreciated the complexity of the problem and produced theories of personality which are more comprehensive than western ones and merit study as well as attention from the point of view of contemporary creative philosophical thinking.* [1]

There seems to be in Western thinking a persisting and deeply ingrained notion of a soul as the true and indestructible kernel of human personality which inhabits a fragile and perishable material body. It is basically a religious conception developed in theological circles by combining the primitive biblical story of the creation of man by God, who breathed an immortal soul into a body formed from the soil of the earth, with the sophisticated notion of substance derived from the philosophy of Aristotle.

It is true that modern scientific thinking has no room for such a concept of soul and bases its understanding of man on study of his body and its functions and particularly of the nervous system, including the brain. The soul has become the 'mind' in modern terminology and is largely viewed as a mere product of chemical processes in the brain. Some psychologists feel uneasy even about the notion of mind and prefer to deal with man's mental processes in terms of behavioural patterns.

Nevertheless, certain features of human personality, such as its complexity, its continuity and the sense of personal identity throughout the changing phases of human life from childhood to old age present man with a constant challenge which philosophers and psychologists cannot ignore, even though general consensus on the nature of human personality remains elusive. One thing seems to be recognised, however, namely that personality is a complex structure composed of dynamic functions with an intrinsic capacity of coordination for the purpose of survival. This is a reasonable definition as far as it goes, but it leaves unresolved the question of the centre or carrier of this structural coordination which is only another way of asking for the essential principle in man which is responsible for the experience of personal identity or individuality which is distinct and separate from the rest of reality surrounding him. Why is the flux of reality not a fully interrelated or integrated process and what singles out certain partial processes within it and keeps them together as self-conscious individuals?

This is not a question science can deal with and therefore, nowadays, psychologists

usually shy away from it lest they are accused of metaphysical speculation. This, however, was not the case in the past. Thus Hans Driesch [2] felt entitled to assume the existence of an immaterial coordinating principle in man for which he adopted the designation 'entelechy' (*entelekheia*), another Aristotelian term, no doubt better suited, because of its implied dynamic character, as the basis for understanding the nature of personality than is the rigid concept of soul as a 'substance'. It has not gained currency and the notion of the soul as a compact abiding carrier of personal identity seems to linger on in the minds of people, even if they no longer believe in its religious significance or its survival of bodily death. As a result, non-Christian religious and philosophical views about the nature of human personality have often been dealt with by academic researchers using the conceptual apparatus stemming from Christian theological tradition.

The interpretation of Indian systems of thought has particularly suffered from this tendency and especially from the importation of the notion of the soul as an indestructible substance. [3] No Indian school of thought has ever regarded the human soul or the carrier of human personal identity as a permanent substance. The empirical human personality has been understood in all of them as a fluid complex or a changeable collection of functions or living forces characterised by intrinsic intelligence which are held together or coordinated by a dynamic structural principle often termed just 'person' (*puruṣa*), sometimes carried by a transcendental, divine force. The complex and fluid nature of human personality as a structural functioning whole already comes across in the oldest sources of Indian tradition, the *Vedas*. In them its components are called 'gods' or 'deities' (*devas, devatās*), meaning universal forces ('intelligences') which 'abide' in man 'like cattle in a pen' (AV 11,8,32). They include the mental and sensory faculties and capabilities which reside in a perishable material body and are supported, together with all things and other beings and even the whole world, by a universal divine force often referred to as *aja* (the unborn, e.g. RV 8,41,10). One can reconstruct the Vedic view of man from the hymns as a structural integrated whole which exists or operates on three levels of reality as follows:

(1) The unborn force on the transcendental level (*aja*), which is universal and sustains all phenomenal reality and in which therefore the individual personality is rooted, but which does not represent its individual identity.

(2) The mental processes on the subtle phenomenal level are of universal character and kinds of cosmic intelligences ('deities', *devatās*). They combine into functioning personality structures and represent their mental, vital and sensory functions, such as the mind or thought (*manas* which covers also feelings or 'heart'), life-essence manifested in breathing (*ātman*), vitality and life-force (*asu* and *prāṇa*), sensory faculties, such as seeing (*cakṣu*), hearing (*śrotra*), speech or the faculty to communicate (*vāc*), and various other functions.

(3) The physiological processes of the material body (*śarīra*), which is likewise composed of universal forces or elements (just as are earth and the whole visible universe) and which operates on the gross phenomenal level of reality. They are symbolised by the four (or five) elements of earth, water, air and fire (to which some texts add ether or space).

The principle which engages all these universal constituents so as to combine into a structural unit and which holds them together 'like cattle in a pen', thereby forming them into an individual personality, is *tanū*. This could be translated as 'shape', but is best described as character and likeness. It is that which enables one to identify

someone else by sight (bodily likeness) or recognise him as an individual person (with a specific character). [4]

Tanū therefore operates on both the subtle and the gross phenomenal level of reality. When a man dies, whereafter his body is burnt on the funeral pyre and the constituents and elements forming his personality and body disperse into their cosmic abodes (cf. RV 10,16,3; AV 5,9,7 etc.), *tanū* survives and is, at least for a fraction of time, 'empty' as a mere shell or shadow, i.e. a pure structure as such (comparable to the Cheshire cat's smile left behind for a while after the disappearance of the cat in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*), but it seems that it cannot exist in this state for any length of time and it immediately becomes again 'fully shaped' (*sarvatanū*), i.e. a phenomenal *tanū* filled with all its constituents, and it then goes to the world of the fathers (*pitṛloka*) or to another world according to merit where it eventually suffers another death (*punarmṛtyu*), and so it continues.

The question now arises whether *tanū* is a permanent or timeless entity, a kind of forerunner of the individual *puruṣa* of the Sāṅkhya system, in which case it would be rooted in the transcendental level of *aja* and would continue its existence within it on salvation. There are verses in which the Vedic worshipper, conscious of the uncertain and impermanent status of life not only on earth, but also in the world of the fathers and other higher levels of existence, prayed for individual immortality (RV 5,55,4; 7,59,12; cf. also 9,113,8–11). He obviously believed that it was achievable, and since it is *tanū* which represents the individuality factor (all other constituents of his personality forming only its temporary and changing character, the 'filling' of *tanū*), it would have to be also the carrier of individual immortality, while the configuration of 'deities' or constituents which would form his immortal personality would presumably reassemble in him in a perfected way. One could perhaps even assume that after the physical death of a person prepared for immortality his *tanū*, empty in the moment of dispersal of the phenomenal constituents of his personality, might directly encounter the 'unborn' or enter its transcendental dimension where its 'filling' would be of some unspecified ultimate nature. There is hardly any direct evidence one could adduce from the Vedic hymns to support this assumption, but could it be that here is an early indication, however slight, of a line of thought which found its eventual expression in the idea of the possibility of instant liberation immediately after death as expounded in the texts of the so-called 'Tibetan book of the dead'?

Since the *devatās* or constituents of the individual personalities are universal and operate in all of them, the individuality of various characters must derive from the mutual proportion in which the 'deities' are configured inside the 'pen' of individual *tanūs*. In a somewhat similar way *tanū* impresses its individuality on bodily appearance, e.g. in the configuration of features of the face (eyes, nose, mouth etc.) which are the same with all, yet become fully individualised in individual faces. If *tanū* thus determines, both on a mental and bodily level, the configuration of elements which fill it, it apparently also preserves its structurally configured individuality in its empty state, which would mean that it also preserves its individual uniqueness on the transcendental 'unborn' level, i.e. in the state of immortality, whatever 'filling' it might obtain there, if any. This again points to multiplicity of eternal *puruṣas* of the type found in the classical Sāṅkhya (and also in Patañjali's Yoga system) in the state of final liberation.

The lines of thought detectable behind the mythological imagery and ritual language of the *Vedas* continued with modifications and progressive conceptualisation into subsequent periods of the *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Upaniṣads* (and later writings), but linguistically there was a shift into a slightly different tribal idiom which eventually

resulted in the formation of classical Sanskrit. In this process several Vedic terms lost their currency, e.g. *ṛta*, the universal law, which was substituted by *dharma* and in the context of ethics also by *karma*. Another casualty was *tanū*, which is perhaps a matter of regret, since this notion would have had a potential for developing into a well defined concept. As it is, it is impossible to know to what use this term might have been put in subsequent schools of thought, all of which developed their distinctive terminologies for their theories of human personality, albeit with some overlaps.

When we turn to investigating the *Upaniṣads*, we find in them several strands of thought pertaining to personality, three of which are of the utmost interest. All of them preserve the Vedic three-tier pattern in which the ultimate transcendental level (1) is shared by all of them and is now termed *ātman*. Originally the universal life-force manifested in breath whose cosmic abode was the domain of the god of wind Vāta, the mysterious 'breath of the gods', *ātman* has now acquired the status of the unborn and ultimate central force sustaining all existence (thereby becoming identified with *brahman*). Its very name indicates, in its original meaning, a dynamic character, but its identification with the universal essence and ground of being, *brahman*, caused it to appear as something like a static principle which is, however, also the intelligent source and sustaining essence of the whole of phenomenal reality and therefore also of all individual things and beings. The nature of *ātman/brahman* is proclaimed to be 'ungraspable' (*agṛhya*) on the phenomenal level, and nothing can be predicated about it (*neti neti*; BU 3,9,26). Yet it remains the inmost self and the inner controller (*antaryāmi*; BU 3,7,1–23) of all things and beings and therefore of each individual personality, while not being identical with any of them.

The individual phenomenal personality on the subtle level (2) in the first strand of Upaniṣadic thought I have selected is described in connection with the story of Indra's quest for his inner self (CU 8,7–12). There it is referred to as *eṣo'kṣiṇi puruṣo*, 'the person in the eye', i.e. the person who sees—which means, in other words, that it is the person which is the subject of the process of perception. The universal *ātman* of the ultimate level is its inner controller, and as it inhabits, on the gross level (3), a material body (*śarīra*), the body also becomes an instrument or basis (*adhiṣṭhāna*) for the bodiless and immortal *ātman*. When a person finally finds this inner self by realising the true state of purity (*samprasāda*), transcending the body and experiencing the supreme light, he appears in his true form (*svarūpa*) as the ultimate person (*uttama puruṣa*), i.e. he reaches the transcendental and ultimate level (1). Yet he is not lost in the universal *ātman*. He remains even then a person, namely a 'person with the eye' (*cākṣuṣa puruṣa*), but this eye is now divine because it is, in fact, his whole mind which has become his eye (*mano'sya daivam cakṣu*). He knows then that, at bottom, he is the immortal *ātman*, but he retains his individuality as *puruṣa* and rejoices in all phenomena.

The second chosen Upaniṣadic 'scheme' is related in a passage dealing with death and the afterlife (BU 4,4,2). When someone dies, *ātman* departs from him, followed by the life-force (*prāṇa*) and other vital universal forces, and he becomes a purely mental being (*savijñāno*, one with consciousness or mentality), and (if he has not found or realised his inmost self, the universal *ātman*), he is followed by those elements of his former personality which are of mental nature and form a kind of mental complex (called *savijñānam*) of which knowledge (*vidyā*), past actions (*karmaṇī*) and previous experience (*pūrvaprajñā*), which 'envelop him', are the main constituents.

Thus we have here an individual purely mental being (*savijñāno*), which would appear to correspond to the Vedic *tanū*, enveloped in a mental complex (*savijñānam*)

which forms its phenomenal personality and belongs therefore to the subtle level of phenomenal reality. The whole being is called, in this disembodied state, *liṅga* (mark, characteristic, character), and is fuelled by desire (*kāma*) and propelled by volitional drive (*kratu*), obviously additional constituents of the mental complex *savijñānam*. That leads it to engage in future activities for whose sake it takes another body (BU 4,4,6), like a caterpillar that passes from one blade of grass to another (BU 4,4,3), but rebirth of this disembodied personality complex into gross phenomenality is not an automatic process. In line with the Upaniṣadic maxim that all existence is sustained by the transcendental universal force, it is *ātman*, the inner controller, who directs the process. As a goldsmith makes a form from a piece of gold and then another, perhaps a more beautiful one, so *ātman* having discarded one body, creates another one, perhaps even a more beautiful one on another level of reality, among fathers or gods, and the being is reborn (BU 4,4,4), but merit plays the chief role in this process of rebirth: one becomes good by good action and bad by bad action (BU 4,4,5). The universal *ātman* is, of course, again the inmost core and the inner controller of the new being, but this is not to say that he passes from life to life as an individual 'soul' of the transmigrating being, just as the goldsmith does not pass from one golden form he creates to another which he makes from recycled gold.

In this scheme, the notion of a purely mental being (*savijñāno*) could be regarded as corresponding to the *tanū* of the Vedas. It is called *liṅga* in the *Upaniṣad* when enveloped by or filled with phenomenal components, i.e. when *savijñāno* is enveloped by *savijñānam*. (The Vedas do not seem to have different expressions for these two distinct states of the individual personality and use the term *tanū* for both of them.) If the being frees itself from the constituents enveloping it and remains without desire, then, being at bottom *brahman*, it attains *brahman* (*brahmaiva san brahmāpyeti* BU 4,4,6), i.e. it reaches the ultimate transcendental level.

In this *Upaniṣad*'s particular wording is an ambiguity, however. One can view this individual being as preserving its individual identity even on the ultimate level, but one can also argue for a monistic position, later adopted by Advaita Vedānta and strongly advocated by Śaṅkara. The former seems more plausible to me, since one is *brahman* (has *brahman/ātman* as one's inner core) even on the phenomenal level before one attains *brahman* (although not being aware of it directly and therefore having to keep dying and being reborn), and directly knowing *brahman* makes one immortal (BU 4,4,14). Knowing *brahman* and being immortal can be understood as consciously existing (as a perfected person) on a par with *brahman* without merging with it. Expressions of identification (such as 'I am *brahman*', BU 1,4,10) make an impression of emphatic metaphorical statements, stemming from an ecstatic experience rather than assertions of total identity.

The third strand of Upaniṣadic thought pertaining to the problem of personality employs the term *nāmarūpa* (lit. 'name and form'). The term makes its first appearance as a general explanation of the multiplicity of phenomenal reality (BU 1,6,1–3) sustained by one transcendental power on the ultimate level which is again termed *brahman*. Despite being ultimately sustained by *brahman*, multiplicity is the province of *nāma*, *rūpa* and *karma*. That would seem to put these entities onto the phenomenal level, but at the same time all three are said to be *ātman* and proclaimed to be real (*satya*), their function being to veil *ātman* which is immortal life. [5] Even action is said to stem from *ātman*. Here again is an ambiguity which allows *nāma* and *rūpa* and even *karma* (but of course not *kāma*, worldly desire) to be viewed as being real even on the ultimate level or to regard them as *ātman*'s agents of multiplicity on the phenomenal

level. Śaṅkara of course interprets the passage in his commentary in the spirit of his radical monism, but overstates his argument by proclaiming the triad of *nāma/rūpa/ karma*, virtually in Buddhist fashion, to be 'no self' (*nātmā*).

The existence of *nāmarūpa* on the ultimate level seems to be favoured by the saying that, although *nāma* and *rūpa* are carried by space, they exist within *brahman*, the immortal, the *ātman* (CU 8,14,1). Later Upaniṣads appear to favour the opposite view, regarding *nāmarūpa* to be the impermanent phenomenal personality which is dissolved when the ultimate is reached (MuU 3,2,8; PU 6,5), although the ultimate ('the higher than the high') is called here *puruṣa* so that the problem is only shifted onto a different linguistic platform. Śaṅkara interprets it as reaching the undifferentiated state of *ātman* (*eviśeṣātmabhāva*), while Rāmānuja argues that it means reaching the sameness of nature (*mātra*), not the identical state of being with *ātman*.

The origin of multiplicity out of the primeval unity of being (*sat*, understood as an intelligent being and called *devatā*, 'deity') via *nāmarūpa* was achieved, according to another Upaniṣadic passage (CU 6,2,1–6,3,2), through the 'living *ātman*' (*jīvenātmanā*) to which I shall return presently. The nature of the individual phenomenal personality resulting from this process and designated as *nāmarūpa* is revealed in a further passage, as was often the case in the *Vedas* and *Brāhmaṇas*, again in connection with death, i.e. with the loss of *rūpa* on the gross phenomenal level (BU 3,3,12–13). The sage Yājñavalkya is asked in a public discussion what remains when a person (*puruṣa*) dies. His answer is: 'Name, for name is without end, without end are all gods (*devas*)'. The reference to all gods is no doubt made on account of the old Vedic notion of the divine nature of the constituent factors and faculties of the personality. 'Name' denotes the structural configuration of these universal divine constituents (*devas, devatās*) which make up the individual character of a personality and it corresponds to the broad meaning of the Vedic *tanū*. The fact that 'name' designates the whole character structure of a person is accounted for by the well-known archaic belief according to which a person's name magically incorporated his true individuality or essence and even his life. The remnant of this view survives in nicknames (and even some surnames) which often express some important or conspicuous character feature of their bearers.

There can hardly be any doubt that behind the relevant Upaniṣadic passages there was a school of thought with an intricate notion of human personality termed *nāmarūpa* which entailed the idea of an intelligent and functioning structural entity with the capacity to bind universal forces organically within itself so as to constitute a distinctive individual character (*nāma*) and imprint this individuality onto the visible carrier of this individuality as its appearance, shape, form or likeness (*rūpa*), known on the gross phenomenal level as 'body'. It has, of course, a visible shape which is also sometimes called 'body', also when born on subtle phenomenal levels as a divine or demon-like being (*deva, asura*). The usage of the term *nāmarūpa* as a designation of the empirical personality reappears in early Buddhism.

As indicated above, the sustaining force of all that exists on the phenomenal level and therefore also of personality is, on the ultimate level, *brahman*. It was found to be so in the course of searching for the divine essence and source of the universe and came to be identified with *ātman*, which, in turn, was found in the course of searching for the core or essence of life in general and of individual beings in particular. This identification gives *ātman* a certain air of aloofness. When the way in which *ātman* participates in the process of diversification and in sustaining living beings is contemplated, the attribute 'living' (*jīva*) is added. In the passage (CU 6,3,2) referred to above

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the universal nature of even this 'living *ātman*' still appears to be prevalent. In order to designate an individual being or person some *Upaniṣads* adopted the term *jīva* as a noun (e.g. MaU 6,19) which also gained currency in the epic literature (e.g. BhG 7,5; 15,7) and other texts. Later the compound *jīvātman* came to be favoured (in Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, the *purāṇas*, medieval yogic texts etc.); it expresses the idea of two universal forces combined in the process of forming and sustaining an individual being. Eventually, however, *jīvātman* came to be understood largely as the individual entity transmigrating from life to life which has appeared to many European interpreters as the nearest equivalent of the notion of the 'soul', but should rather be regarded as the equivalent of the Vedic *tanū* and the Upaniṣadic *liṅga* or perhaps even of *nāmarūpa*, if we bear in mind that *rūpa* does not necessarily refer to the material body of a being, but is, basically, its character made to some extent outwardly visible either by giving shape to a material body on the gross phenomenal level or appearing as a shape on any of the subtle phenomenal levels.

The term *jīva* also occurs in Pāli Buddhist texts where it mostly preserves the general meaning of 'life', but the tendency to individualise it makes itself felt when it denotes 'life-span'. It refers to the individual person only when it is mentioned in connection with the body. Jainism has gone further and has adopted the term for its well-defined composite and karmically stained individual entity on the phenomenal level which could therefore be called 'soul'. It is capable of purification and can reach liberation from the round of rebirths, thereby becoming a *siddha* and preserving its individuality on the ultimate level as a free spirit for ever.

All subsequent Hindu systems, in fact, only further elaborated conceptually and presented variations on the Upaniṣadic notions of personality, both with respect to its roots in, or existence (in the liberated state) on, the ultimate level and with regard to its phenomenal nature as a dynamic structural complex, constantly changing while transmigrating from life to life. The ultimate level force, usually referred to as *brahman/ ātman*, may form its controlling core or essence, but it remains universal so that it is not the carrier of its individuality and remains untouched by the process of transmigration to which individual personalities are subjected. The individuality of a personality is determined or defined by the configuration of the inside of the personality structure which accounts for the different proportions of the universal capabilities and character features ('deities') in different individuals and may also be in some way preserved when the personality reaches perfection and is liberated on the ultimate level, except where this is categorically denied because of a strict monistic stance as is the case with the Advaita Vedānta school, best represented by Śaṅkara. Here real existence is ascribed only to the universal *brahman* on the ultimate level, while the phenomenal personality and its experience of self-identity is proclaimed to be illusory and only a kind of temporary imposition on *brahman*.

Nevertheless even Advaita Vedānta produced an elaborate theory of phenomenal personality as a complex structure of layers or sheaths (*kośas*), forming gross and subtle 'bodies', one enveloping the other in the manner of a Russian doll. [6] The gross body (*sthūla śarīra*) is the outer sheath 'made of food' (*annamaya kośa*), and it is a kind of petrified *karma*. The subtle phenomenal body (*sūkṣma śarīra*) is the transmigrating carrier of individuality, constantly undergoing changes as a result of karmic actions and also called character body (*liṅga śarīra*); it consists of three sheaths, namely *prāṇa-, mano-* and *vijñānamaya kośas* (layers made of life, mind and consciousness). The ultimate, though still illusory, layer or sheath whose kernel is *jīvātman*, is 'made of bliss' (*ānandamaya kośa*) and corresponds to the volitional body (*kāraṇa śarīra*) whose

actions, being carried out in ignorance of his true nature, keep man from experiencing the ultimate level as the unity of existence, consciousness and bliss (*saccidānanda*) which equals *brahman*.

Illusory or not, this Advaitic scheme is certainly a coherent account of a functioning personality structure on all three levels. It is not necessary to go into detail with regard to the other Vedāntic schools (which are often classified as theistic) other than to point out their different stances with respect to the ultimate status of individual personalities. In Rāmānuja's system of Viśiṣṭādvaita or 'qualified non-dualism' individuals are not illusory, but real, although only as attributes of God, yet preserving a measure of individuality even in the state of liberation. In Madhva's dualistic system Dvaita they are regarded as separate beings entirely distinct from God, but fully dependent on him both when incarnate and in the state of salvation.

Perhaps the most elaborate, consistent and conceptually cleanest theory of personality was developed by the classical system of Sāṅkhya philosophy. It adopted as its central concept the term *puruṣa*, i.e. person, and it is a true philosophy of personalism (or personalistic pluralism) within the broader framework of a metaphysical dualism. The expression *puruṣa* goes back to the *Vedas* (RV 10,90) where it denotes the source of the universe and all living beings. Three fourths of this cosmic *puruṣa* remain transcendent (on the ultimate level), while with one fourth of himself he penetrates the earth and dwells in the hearts of beings. The expression *puruṣa* is also used in the sense of person or individual man (e.g. RV 97,4–5) and also in the general sense of man as a species or mankind, and it is linked with Brahma, the Supreme Being (e.g. AV 10,2). We have further seen how the term was used in the early *Upaniṣads* both for the empirical personality (the 'person in the eye') on the phenomenal level and for the perfected person (*uttama puruṣa*) on the ultimate level whether existing as a separate individual or reaching the undifferentiated state of *ātman*. In the popular philosophy contained in and accompanying the epics the term *puruṣa* is used in a virtually indiscriminate way alongside Vedāntic terminology, the *uttama puruṣa* being equal to *brahman/ātman* and the individual *puruṣa* to *jīvātman*.

It has been suggested that the Sāṅkhya system of philosophy is foreshadowed and was developed from the Upaniṣadic personalistic trends reflected in the passages operating with the concept of *puruṣa*. [7] However, the atheistic character of Sāṅkhya philosophy and its distinct dualism do not have predecessors or clearly recognisable germs in the *Upaniṣads* from which they could have evolved and, besides, traces of Sāṅkhya type thinking can be identified both in Jainism and early Buddhism. It is therefore much more likely that there may have existed a school of thought outside the Vedic–Brāhmanic–Upaniṣadic tradition from which eventually emerged the classical Sāṅkhya system and in which also the Pātañjala Yoga system (which precedes classical Sāṅkhya) had found inspiration for its view of human personality. [8]

Sāṅkhya is a metaphysical dualism, because it postulates two distinct abstract principles, namely *puruṣa* (spirit) and *prakṛti* (nature). In the concrete context of the world process Sāṅkhya recognises the existence of a multiplicity of independent individual *puruṣas* (*puruṣabahutvam*) on the ultimate level and also in the state of final freedom (*kaivalya*). They are uncreated and do not themselves create or act in any way. They are pure transcendental spirits whose exact nature remains undescribed in the classical text of the Sāṅkhya school (SK), but they are said to have the capacity (*siddha*) of witnessing (*sākṣitva*) and seeing (*draṣṭṛtva*), although not of acting (*akartṛbhāva*), and are therefore without any doubt conscious beings or personalities (SK 18–19) rather than 'pure consciousnesses'. [9]

The complex empirical personalities on both the subtle and gross phenomenal levels are created for *puruṣas*, together with the whole multilevel universe, by *prakṛti* each time she is being watched by them or by any one of them, their attention acting merely as a catalyst in the process. In this way the *puruṣas* only 'illuminate' their prakṛtic personalities with the light of consciousness and, fascinated by the spectacle of the world process conjured up by *prakṛti*, become so absorbed in it that their true independent (*kaivalya*) nature becomes totally obscured to them, somewhat in the manner of a spectator in a cinema who gets so involved in the actions on the screen that he identifies with the hero and temporarily forgets his own independent personality. What this means for the relation between the *puruṣas* and the phenomenal world is that it is not one of causal linkage, but one of catalytic association (*saṁyoga*) which lends the unconscious prakṛtic processes the character of conscious actions (SK 20). The simulation of conscious processes on the prakṛtic (phenomenal) level is enabled by the receptive and reflecting capacity of *prakṛti* which emerges as her first evolute when she is activated by the catalytic presence and attention of *puruṣas* and it is called *buddhi*, best understood as 'cognition, discrimination, intelligence'; although a cosmic force, it operates in the world only via individual beings, and a *puruṣa*, seeing himself perfectly reflected in it like in a mirror, mistakes his *buddhi* image for himself. (In the end it is also the discriminative feature of *buddhi*'s reflective capacity which enables *puruṣa* to recognise his mistake and free himself from his identification with his prakṛtic personality).

Thus each *puruṣa* remains (ontologically) completely outside the world process (even before realising his true nature and freedom), and therefore also outside his own phenomenal personality which appears to be just a prakṛtic 'puppet' enlivened by his attention, and it is only this prakṛtic 'puppet' which transmigrates from life to life guided by the *puruṣa*'s light of consciousness like a blind man, carrying on his shoulders a lame but seeing man (SK 21). The prakṛtic 'puppet' or 'blind man', i.e. the phenomenal transmigrating personality, is eventually reabsorbed into *prakṛti* when the respective *puruṣa* withdraws his attention from it and realises that he is an independent free spirit in the state of *kaivalya*. This 'puppet' or phenomenal personality which is the actual (empirical) person man deems himself to be is, according to Sāṅkhya as in any other system of Indian philosophy, again a complex, functioning structure. Its constituents are described as evolutes of *prakṛti*, via her principle of separation and individuation (*ahaṅkāra*) and through the three attributive forces (*guṇas*) [10] which constitute her, along two lines. Out of *sattva guṇa* there emerge sets of conditions which manifest themselves on the subtle phenomenal level as cosmic forces of mental but impersonal character and which form, in innumerable individual structures, the mental faculties of beings. In the human personality, they appear to function as the mind (*manas*, which is the organ reflecting the consciousness of the *puruṣa*), the five cognitive (sensory) capacities (*buddhīndriyas*) and the five capacities for action (*karmendriyas*). [11] Out of *tamas* emerge five sets of gross phenomenal elements (*tanmātras*) which constitute the external world and its objects, including the material framework of the bodily organism for each person (SK 24–27).

The personality complex is called in Sāṅkhya also by a summary expression *liṅga* or *sūkṣma liṅga* and it transmigrates, taking up bodies 'produced by father and mother' (SK 39–40). Within this complex *manas*, illuminated by *puruṣa*'s consciousness via *buddhi* and individualised by *ahaṅkāra*, represents the inner organ (*antaḥkaraṇa*), and the two sets of capacities (*buddhīndriyas* and *karmendriyas*) enable the contact with the external world (SK 32–35). Thus we have here the notion of a whole empirical-cum-

metaphysical personality on all three levels of reality. The ultimate level *puruṣa* corresponds in a way to the *ātman* of the *Upaniṣads*, but has the individuality of the *uttama puruṣa* of some *Upaniṣads*. No source of *puruṣas* is ever mentioned, their multiplicity is assumed even before their involvement on phenomenal levels is contemplated and, of course, they also preserve their individuality when freed from any such involvement. The structural character of the constituents of the individual personality on the fine and gross phenomenal levels is enabled by *prakṛti*'s ability to respond to individual *puruṣa*'s attention individually through *ahaṅkāra* and to mirror their individuality via *buddhi* on both levels, namely in their subtle body (*sūkṣmaliṅga*) as well as in the body 'produced by father and mother'.

One can speculate that the Vedic expression *tanū* could well correspond to the term *puruṣa* both when 'empty' of cosmic forces (*devatās*, and therefore on the threshold or in the state of immortality) and when 'filled' with them on the phenomenal level, except that *puruṣas* only imagine they are thus filled. Since Sāṅkhya insists on the multiplicity of individual *puruṣas* on the ultimate level even in the state of freedom when their phenomenal personalities have dissolved into *prakṛti*, they must be somehow distinct from each other, perhaps by their internal structural configuration, as was suggested in the case of *tanū*.

Turning to Buddhism we find that the early Buddhist approach to the problem of personality in the Pāli sources is highly pragmatic and is dealt with virtually only in connection with the teaching on liberation. In that context it is only the phenomenal personality which is analysed into its subtle and gross phenomenal constituents in order to show that none of them can be regarded as an individual's true 'I' (*aham*) or 'self' (*atta*). These constituents are described as five groups or 'aggregates' (*khandhas*) of attachment (*pañcupādānakkhandhā*). [12]

As a whole, the personality is frequently referred to by the compound expression known already from the *Upaniṣads*, namely *nāmarūpa*, which is a functioning and complex psychophysical unit operating and subjectively experienced on both the subtle and the gross phenomenal level. Its subtle part is often called *nāmakāya* ('mental body') and represents the individual personality structure or the character of the person. Its four constituents (*arūpino khandhā*) are the aggregates of empirical consciousness (*viññāṇa*); volitional processes (*saṅkhāras*) which include urges, instincts, tendencies, inclinations, desires, decision making and aspirations; perceptual and conceptual processes (*saññā*), i.e. sensory and mental activities; and feelings (*vedanā*) of a pleasant, unpleasant and neutral kind. Its gross part is the 'aggregate of form' (*rūpa khandha*) called *rūpakāya* ('form body') and it is the material organism composed of the familiar gross phenomenal elements. It is discarded on death (cf. D 15 = PTS II, p. 62). All these constituents are obviously impersonal processes experienced by individuals as their capabilities and capacities. Although these constituents cannot be referred to, in the manner of the *Vedas*, as cosmic intelligences (*devatās*), they are nevertheless universal phenomena (*dhammas*) shared by all; they are more or less the same in the experience of different individuals, except for their intensity and mutual proportional configuration which accounts for the differences in character of the individual personalities.

When the *rūpakāya* is discarded, *nāmakāya* 'rolls on' and is sometimes called, in its discarnate state, *gandhabba*, especially when seeking 'entry into womb', i.e. a new rebirth in the material world (M 38 = PTS I, p. 266). (Even in its discarnate state the *nāmakāya* or *gandhabba* appears, of course, also on the subtle level, as a shape, i.e. a *rūpa*, albeit one devoid of gross phenomenal elements.) It is clearly the transmigrating

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carrier of the personality features and of the character of the individual, although it cannot be regarded as anything like a permanent and unchanging 'soul' or an abiding 'self' when incarnate in the material body (*rūpakāya*). However, it certainly accounts for a person's continuity from life to life.

The terminology in the Pāli Canon is not fully systematised and fixed and one can see that in specific instances other terms than the above ones are used to pinpoint the special coordinating force or factor which structures impersonal mental processes into a functioning personality. They are: *manas*, *citta*, *viññāna*, and also *purisa* or *puggala* (Skt. *puruṣa* and *pudgala*).

The term *manas* (mind; also *mana*, *mano*) belongs, as the instrument of conceptual cognition, to the group of *saññā khandha* and coordinates within it the perceptual processes derived from the activity of the five senses. This coordinating power, and the capacity to reflect the external world as a meaningful whole, gives it a central position and this enables it to be viewed as designating, on occasions, the whole personality or character of man. In this context it is supplemented and elucidated by *citta* (mind, 'heart', character) which also often stands for man's character. [13]

The expression *viññāna*, normally denoting the aggregate of (empirical) consciousness, sometimes includes the wider meaning of *manas* or *citta* (S XII = PTS II, p. 95), which of course includes the 'unconscious' parts of mind, so that it too can stand for 'personality' or 'character'. It further appears in the chain of 'dependent origination' (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) where it is the precondition of the appearance of *nāmarūpa* and is itself conditioned by the aggregate of volitions (*saṅkhāra khandha*), at the same time being the permeating element of all other *khandhas* (S XII,1,2 = PTS II, p. 4; S XII, 56 = PTS III, p. 61). These are all instances of describing the complex dynamism of the functioning personality structure. Sometimes *viññāna* is used in this context as a covering term for the transmigrating personality instead of *gandhabba*, e.g. when it is said that if *viññāna* did not enter a mother's womb, a new *nāmarūpa* would not arise in it (D 15 = PTS II, p. 63). Later canonical works invented a new qualifying term for the discarnate consciousness between two incarnations, namely 'linking consciousness' (*paṭisandhi viññāna*, see Pm I,1,4 = PTS I, p. 52). Another reference to *viññāna* after bodily death occurs with respect to arahatship. When a person reaches liberation, his *viññāna* can no longer be encountered by saṁsāric beings, including gods such as Māra, because it does not establish itself anywhere within it (S IV, 3, 3 = PTS I, p. 122; SXXII,87 = PTS III, p. 124). It is not said, however, that his *viññāna* vanishes.

The expressions *purisa* and *puggala* occur throughout the Pāli Canon, meaning 'person', 'man' and occasionally also a being on any plane of existence. In the case of *puggala* also the meaning 'character' occurs, particularly in Abhidhamma texts. Both of these expressions indicate the recognition, in early Buddhism, of the existence of a living complex entity, an individual being (*satta*) or person, although its precise nature is never fully revealed. A person or being as such, it is maintained, cannot be apprehended, only its constituents can, and the term is used for them when they function as a structure, just as a chariot, as such, cannot be apprehended, only its parts can, and the term 'chariot' is used when these parts 'are rightly set' (S V,10 = PTS I, p. 135). In a similar way an enlightened one cannot be apprehended, but his attributes can while he is still alive, namely his body and his qualities as a perfect teacher full of compassion and wisdom, although their 'right setting' is beyond grasp. In the case of a chariot, the 'right setting' of parts (creating a structure out of a heap of materials) is obviously done by the craftsman, the chariot, as such, is therefore present in his mind as an idea. In the case of a being or person, the structuring factor which 'sets' the

khandhas 'right' cannot be pinpointed (it cannot be *taṇhā*, craving, for that is only its moving force on the phenomenal level). A person or being, enlightened or not, simply cannot be apprehended and is 'unfathomable'.

The concept of a being or a person is thus a bridge to understand, as far as it is at all possible, the status of a liberated one (whether a Buddha, an *arahat* or a *bodhisatta*), referred to also by normal terms for a person or a being, with an added qualification, as *sappurisa, mahāpurisa, uttamapurisa* and *mahāsattva* to distinguish him from an unliberated one. The most important term for the liberated person, however, is *tathāgata* ('thus gone' or 'thus arrived'). The question is: does this term refer to an enlightened one only during his lifetime or can one speak about a particular *tathāgata* also after his bodily death? If this question is to be answered, it has to be done without resorting to any of the four predicates associated with it in the texts, namely that he then 'is', 'is not', 'is and is not' and 'neither is nor is not'.

There has been a tendency in some quarters to interpret this refusal to make a categorical statement about the status of the enlightened ones as non-existence or nothingness. [14] In brushing aside these four propositions, however, the texts certainly do not allow the status of a *tathāgata* to be construed as being one of nothingness, rather they indicate that it is nothing that can be conceived by normal human cognitive faculties, because it is *'deep, immeasurable, hard to fathom like the great ocean'* (M 72 = PTS I, pp. 487–488). This is an undeniably positive statement about the status of a *tathāgata* in transcendence by way of a comparison (at a time when the ocean would indeed have been an unexplored and unfathomable element). The later development of the Theravāda thought tends to ignore it or confuses it with the concept of *nibbāna*, virtually denying the validity of any notion of a *tathāgata*, let alone of a multiplicity of *tathāgatas*, on the ultimate (nibbānic) level. Some other schools on the other hand, such as Sarvastivāda, and later particularly the Mahāyāna ones, built the whole edifice of their doctrines on the notion of multiple *tathāgatas* arranged in families of transcendental cosmic *Buddhas* with retinues of *Bodhisattvas*, each of them having distinct attributes of perfect qualities in different configurations, often symbolically expressed in the iconographic features of their depictions, thereby enabling their individuality to be recognised, at least by proxy (via artistic creation), also on the phenomenal level.

The explicit recognition of the existence of personality as a continuous structural process which carries along the individuality of beings on the phenomenal and ultimate levels alike, albeit by correspondingly different attributive means, may have been impeded in early schools of Buddhist thought by the fact that the notion of personality was undeservedly linked to the Upaniṣadic notion of 'self' or the core of personality (*ātman/atta*). This metaphysical notion of a universal essence of the whole of reality (identical with *brahman*) as well as of individual things and beings came to be construed also as the individual self and equated misleadingly not only with the notion of the individual 'soul' (*ātman, jīvātman*), but also with personality or person as such or even with the notion of a being (*sattva*), not only in early Theravāda scriptures and later commentaries, but also in modern interpretations of early Buddhism. One encounters, for example, the term 'Self-like "person" ', whatever that may be, with a consequent denial of the validity of the concept of person on the ultimate level on account of the *anatta* doctrine. [15]

There was only one school, belonging to the Vatsīputrīya tradition, which bravely attempted in the 3rd century BC to formulate a concept of person not confused with the notion of its essence or inner self .(*ātman/atta*). It used for it the term *pudgala/ puggala* and was therefore called Pudgalavāda. This school seems to have postulated the

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full existence or reality of the individual person which could not be grasped as such and could not be fully explained in the context of the five *khandhas*. It could not be conceived as being either different from the *khandhas* or identical with them; neither was it seen as existing within them or outside of them. On reaching *nirvāṇa/nibbāna,* the personality of a being would experience total transformation, while retaining its status as a person. Ineffable to the ordinary mind, *puggala* or the person as such was fully understood only by the enlightened ones. [16]

Within the prevailing trend of Abhidharmic impersonalism which failed to distinguish or to disentangle the concept of self (*ātman/atta*) from that of person (*puruṣa/ purisa* and *pudgala/puggala*) the thesis of the Pudgalavāda school was regarded as a heresy and petered out after a few centuries in which Mahāyāna doctrines gradually gained ascendency. Thus failed the only attempt within the Buddhist tradition to clarify conceptually the issue of personality and no other school has ever dared to take it up again. The issue does, of course, fall under the heading of unprofitable questions from the Buddhist point of view, because preoccupation with it does not enhance the task of pursuing liberation. To formulate theories of personality is basically a philosophical preoccupation which is not what Buddhist tradition, with its soteriological thrust, seeks to do. It may also be regarded as a legitimate concern of historians of religious thought to try to formulate such theories in modern terms when interpreting the teachings of different traditions from the outside, as it were, even if a fully fledged and generally acceptable theory of personality, against which doctrines of various systems could be measured, cannot be easily arrived at. The fact that we have not got such a theory in modern Western thought highlights, in a way, the early Buddhist texts' stance that the issue is deep, unfathomable and can be understood only by the enlightened ones.

This is no reason, however, for giving it up, but in pursuing this line of research into various traditions or schools within one tradition without having a clear modern theory for comparison, one should avoid adopting the stance of one of the studied schools to refute other stances with it. [17] Another way of interpreting a certain teaching is to do so purely from within it and on its own terms. This may be an excellent way of elucidating that particular teaching as long as *external* attempts to explain it on philosophical grounds are not being refuted on the basis of that same internal viewpoint. [18] Academic analysis and evaluation must remain independent of internal criteria of studied systems.

In conclusion I think one can say, from the vantage point of philosophy and the history of religious thought, that the Indian tradition was aware, in very early stages of its development, of the fact that human personality is, expressed in modern terms, a complex, functioning and fluid structure, and that it was struggling with terminology to express it, as is shown by the variety of terms used for personality as a whole and for its parts and functions. The structural continuity of personality is understood as persisting through all its changes and preserving the continuous existence of individuals, without a permanent individual essence being ascribed to them, in the course of successive lives on the phenomenal levels of existence and even into the absolute level (with the possible exception of the late Theravāda view and the notable exception of radical Advaitism). The essence of beings being changeable, it represents what is known as character (what they actually are or appear to be at a particular time) and it is determined by the kind of existence the individual's volitional dynamism has been embracing. This volitional drive affects the structural configuration of the individual's mentality which is thereby internally adjusted and 'filled' with corresponding characteristics, which in turn imprint themselves on his phenomenal appearance. This accounts

for the generally held Indian belief in transmigration across the boundaries of species and on subhuman and superhuman planes of existence. The individual being's volitional dynamism may also choose a course during which he will acquire perfect characteristics and which will eventually raise him onto the absolute level to be 'filled' with (nirvāṇic or 'ātmic/brahmic') essence of perfection.

This concept of beings represents the opposite view to that of Thomistic philosophy according to which the *essence* of beings is eternally fixed and (stemming from God's plan before the act of creation) precedes their *existence*, while in a wider sense the Indian view endorses the existentialist *dictum* that existence precedes essence.

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NOTES

[1] Some materials and conclusions in this article are based on or derived from the following three previous research papers of mine: WERNER, KAREL (1978) The Vedic concept of human personality and its destiny, *Journal of Indian Philosophy.* 5, pp. 275–289; WERNER, KAREL (1986) Personal identity in the Upaniṣads and Buddhism, in: Victor C. Hayes (Ed.) *Identity Issues and World Religions. Selected Proceedings of the Fifteenth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions,* (Bedford Park: Australian Association fo the Study of Religions at Sturt Campus) pp. 24–33; WERNER, KAREL (1988) Indian concepts of human personality in relation to the doctrine of the soul, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,* No. 1, pp. 73–97. For detailed references and more extensive argumentation at least the first and the third paper should be consulted.

[2] DRIESCH, HANS (1929) *Grundprobleme der Psychologie,* 2nd edn; previously also in: *Philosophie des Organischen* ,(1909; 2nd edn, 1921), and *Leib und Seele* (1916; 2nd edn, 1920).

[3] Cf. PARRINDER, GEOFFREY (1973) *Indestructible Soul. The Nature of Man and Life after Death in Indian Thought* (London).

[4] *Tanū* is often translated as 'body' like *rūpa*, but both really mean the recognisable 'shape' and are used also for the appearance ('subtle bodies') of gods and other beings in higher spheres of existence. Cf. entries in: GRASSMANN, H. (1873) *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda* (Leipzig).

[5] *ātmā ekaḥ sann etat trayam,* i.e. 'ātman being one [is nevertheless] this triad' (BU 1.6.3.) Immortal life *(prāṇa)* manifested in breath would appear here to be used still as a synonym for *ātman* in reminiscence of its original meaning 'breath'.

[6] This theory goes back at least to *Taittirīya Upaniṣad.* Cf. WERNER, KAREL (1986) Yoga and the old Upaniṣads, in: PETER CONNOLLY (Ed.) *Perspectives on Indian Religion: Papers in Honour of Karel Werner,* (Delhi: Satguru) pp. 1–8.

[7] Cf. JOHNSTON, E. H. (1974) *Early Sāṁkhya. An Essay on its Historical Development according to the Texts* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass) (1956) (1st edn, 1937).

[8] Cf. ZIMMER, HEINRICH (1956) *Philosophies of India,* (New York: Meridian) pp. 280–332.

[9] As Larson would have us believe, see: LARSON, G. J. (1969) *Classical Sāṁkhya* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass) and also the introduction: LARSON, G. J. & BHATTACHARYA, R. S. (1987) *Sāṁkhya. A Dualist Tradition in Indian Philosophy (Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies IV)* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass) Cf. the review of the latter: WERNER, KAREL (1988) *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society,* pp. 429–30.

[10] That is, *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* (purity, energy and inertia) and they figure also in epic philosophy, some post-classical systems of philosophy and in popular religious thought.

[11] These can be circumscribed as capacities for communicating (speech, etc.), handling things, moving from place to place, bodily metabolism (intake of food and emptying) and procreation (through sexual activity).

[12] Passages and statements relevant to the analysis of personality in early Buddhism occur in many discourses in the Pāli Canon and are so numerous that references to only some of them are given in the text of this article. Further references can easily be found in the PTS Dictionary under individual Pāli expressions (given here in brackets).

[13] Cf. useful references and interpretations in the PTS Dictionary under *mano & mana(s)* and *citta,*

ceto, cetasa; citta, being the past participle of the verb *cint* denotes 'that which has been thought, i.e. put together by mental activities', i.e. 'heart', character; cf. M19 = PTS I, p. 115.

[14] Cf. WELBON, GUY RICHARD (1968) *The Buddhist Nirvāna and its Western Interpreters* (University of Chicago Press, London), for some negative interpretations of *nirvāna* which imply cessation of existence and therefore of individual beings. Positive views of *nirvāna* which imply the complete disappearance of the personalities of the enlightened ones come close to the radical Advaitic interpretation of the Upanisadic *brahman/ātman/jīvātman* which accounts for the accusation of Śankara's '*brahman*-only' doctrine as being 'crypto Buddhist'.

[15] The artificially created expression 'selflike person' hardly fits the notion of *purusa/purisa* and certainly not *puggala* as Harvey would have it in his book: HARVEY, PETER (1995) *The Selfless Mind: Personality, Consciousness and Nirvāna in Early Buddhism* (London: Curzon) p. 34.

[16] Cf. CONZE, EDWARD (1962) *Buddhist Thought in India* (Allen & Unwin, London) pp. 122–132.

[17] As does, for example: COLLINS, STEVEN (1982) *Selfless Persons. Imagery and Thought in Theravāda Buddhism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). He interprets the issue fully in the light of late Theravāda developments; cf. WERNER, (1988), note 9. Others advocate some form of the Upanisadic *ātman* doctrine as implicit in Buddhist teachings, as does PÉREZ-REMÓN, JOAQUÍN (1980) *Self and Non-Self in Early Buddhism* (The Hague: Mouton).

[18] As does Peter Harvey when referring to Pudgalavādins and selectively dealing with some points in: WERNER, (1988), note 1, paras. 4.17 and 13.9–10. However, his positive insistence that 'the only way a *thathāgata* can remain different from "other" *thathāgatas* and *nibbāna* is by keeping his constructed personality factors going' oversteps the mark of internal evidence in early texts (although being in agreement with later views of the Theravāda and some other schools which may have influenced Śankara). But in many other respects his systematically written book is a great step forward in the discussion of the issues listed in its full title and it is an indispensable handbook for any future research into them.

Abbreviations:

AV:	*Atharva Veda*
RV:	*Rg Veda*
BhG:	*Bhagavad Gītā*
BU:	*Brhadāranyaka Upanisad*
CU:	*Chāndogya Upanisad*
D:	*Dīgha Nikāya*
M:	*Majjhima Nikāya*
MaiU:	*Maitrī Upanisad*
MuU:	*Mundaka Upanisad*
Pm:	*Patisambhidāmagga*
PTS:	Pāli Text Society
PU:	*Praśna Upanisad*
S:	*Samyutta Nikāya*
SK:	*Sānkhya Kārikā* of Īsvarakrsna
skt:	Sanskrit

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The Self and the Person as Treated in some Buddhist Texts [1]

MITCHIKO ISHIGAMI-IAGOLNITZER

ABSTRACT   *The theme of our conference is "The Concept of a Person". One of the most original attitudes of the Buddha towards this problem was to have dissuaded his followers from clinging to the concept of "person". The word "person" in Pāli is* puggala *(= individual), which represents in early middle Indian dialect* puthakala, *a derivation of Sanskrit:* pṛithak *(= prith or prath + añc = separately, one by one). [2]* Puggala *means person or man, an individual as opposed to a group. Its equivalent in Sanskrit is* pudgala, *which means a personal entity or an individual. If there were any unique and permanent substance unifying this personal entity, it would be the self or the soul,* attan *in Pāli and* ātman *in Sanskrit. The self and the person are closely related to each other. I will trace the evolution of these two notions as treated in some Buddhist texts, firstly in the primitive basic Buddhist texts in verse or in short sentences, secondly in the prose part of some* sūtras *and finally in later developed Mahāyāna Buddhist texts. Then I will confront these notions with the experience of their followers, by taking the example of Zen master Dōgen (1200–1253).*

I. Primitive Buddhist Texts. *Theragāthā, Therīgāthā, Dhammapada, Suttanipāta* (5th–3rd Centuries BC)

The most ancient and basic Buddhist texts were composed in verse or in short sentences so as to be easily memorised. They communicate the vivid and practical teaching of the Buddha, whose aim was above all to help the salvation of men, by avoiding time-consuming metaphysical reflections.

These texts state firstly that men cling to what they consider as "I" or "mine", and are troubled by the attachments that the Buddha advises them to abandon. The *Suttanipāta* (collection of *sūtras*) 756 observes that men take for self what is not self and cling to "name and form" (*nāmarūpa*). According to the *Theragāthā* 575 (The Older Monks' verses), "Stupid men consider their body as theirs". The "name and form" and the "body" mentioned here designate a person, an individual being composed of five aggregates: *rūpa* (material form, four elements: earth, water, fire, air, and six organs), *vedanā* (physical and mental sensations), *samjñā* (perceptions), *samskāra* (mental formations) and *vijñāna* (consciousness).

In the *Samyutta-nikāya* I (the grouped short *sūtras*) the nun Vajrā refuses to answer ontological questions, as coming from Māra (the Devil) about "being" (*sattva*), such as: who made him, where his maker is, from where he emerged, where he is going to after his death.

> 'Being'! Why do you harp upon that word?
> Among false opinions, Māra, have you strayed.
> Mere bundle of conditioned factors, this!

No 'being' can be here discerned to be.
For just as, when the parts are rightly set,
The word 'chariot' arises,
So does our usage agree to say:
" 'A being'! when the aggregates are there." [3]

Other verses of the *Samyutta-nikāya* say:

Knowing that each of these elements is neither "me", nor "mine",
Man detaches himself from the clinging.
He obtains peace of heart
And freedom from bondage. [4]

The *Therīgāthā* (the verses of older nuns) 101 says:

Considering as not Self the formed things, which emerge from a cause
and perish,
I abandoned all desires, and I became pure and calm. [5]

The primitive Buddhist texts dissuade men from confusing the self and the phenomenal person. The Buddha himself did not answer the question of Vacchagotta as to whether the *ātman* exists. [6] The primitive Theravāda schools interpreted this question in various ways. Some of them (Sautrāntikas, Vātsīputrīyas and others), in order to explain transmigration (*samsāra*), supposed a temporal existence of *pudgala*, which they consider as the self. Others, such as the Sarvāstivādins, denied the existence of the self or *ātman* and at the present time the Theravādins of Sri Lanka follow this traditional line. [7]

According to Rāhula Walpola, a monk of Sri Lanka and author of *L'Enseignement du Bouddha* (Paris, Ed. du Seuil, 1961), behind the five aggregates composing an individual there is no substance such as "I", "*ātman*" or the "self". Following the doctrine of "dependent origination", everything is conditioned, relative and interdependent. The famous three verses of the *Dhammapada* say:

All compounded things are impermanent. (*Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā.*)
All compounded things are *dukkha*. (*Sabbe saṅkhāra dukkha.*)
All *dharmas* are without Self. (*Sabbe dhammā anattā*) (in Pāli) [8]

"That is to say, following the teaching of the Theravāda," writes Walpola, "there is no self, either in the individual (*puggala*), or in the *dhamma* (things conditioned or not)". [9] For him *attan* (*attā* in nominative) in early Buddhist texts means only "oneself" and has no metaphysical meaning of the self.

Hajime Nakamura, in his *Jiga to muga* (The Self and without Self) [10] quotes two groups of verses concerning "oneself". The first group concerns a positive oneself.

The *Dhammapada* advises man to defend and govern himself well (157), to make himself his own master (160) or his "refuge" (236, 238), and to take care of his own duty (166). The *Samyutta-nikāya* and the *Udāna* claim:

By looking around in all directions with my thought,
I did not find anything dearer than *attan* (*piyataram attanā*).
Also *attā* is dear for others.
Therefore who loves *attan* (*attakāmo*) must not harm others. [11]

In the second group the Buddha is said to have controlled, trained and conquered himself. [12] So Nakamura supposes that there are two sorts of selves: the ideal self that the saints realise and the ordinary man's egotistic self, subject to desires and to tor-

ments. [13] Candrakīrti explained this, in his *Prasannapadā*, by saying that the teaching of the Buddha is gradual and adapted to his audience. That is why the Buddha spoke of "oneself" as a conventional notion to simple men and taught non-existence of the self to men clinging to their *ego*, and the Middle Way (the truth is between self and non-self) to those capable of penetrating his teaching. [14]

II. Dissection of the Person in the Prose Part of Some *Sūtras*: *Saṃyutta-nikāya, Majjhīma-nikāya, Milindapañha, Āgama* and *Abhidharma-koṣha-bhāṣya* (3rd Century BC–4th Century AD)

The prose part of the Buddhist *sūtras* (composed later to explain the primitive verses) repeats, in order to deliver men from their attachment to any phenomenon, that all things and acts are composed of the five aggregates which emerge and perish and that none of them is the self. [15]

To show the inexistence of a phenomenal self (person), they used an analytical method, called "*zheqiongguan*" in Chinese or "*shakukūgan*" in Japanese, [16] which consists in dissecting a thing into its components, then in showing its lack of identity with each component and in concluding its nominal and unreal existence (vacuity).

We can see some examples of this method in some Pāli texts. The first set of examples of a lute as well as of an oil lamp and of a Pithy tree are in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (Grouped short *sūtras*). The example of a cow is in the *Majjhima-nikāya* (Collection of middle length *sūtras*). The third set of examples are in the *Milindapañhā* (Milinda's questions): the chariot, the flame of an oil-lamp and milk which turns into curds.

1. In the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* IV (Section 165) the Buddha advises a monk to see the person as impermanent. [17] Then he takes an example of a *rājan* (*rājā*, nominative, king) who, charmed by the sound of a lute, breaks it into its parts to find it and is disappointed. In the same way a monk who investigates the body, feelings, perceptions, mental formations and the consciousness will not find anything of "I", "I am" or "mine". [18]

2. In the chapter *Nandakovādasutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* [19], the master Nandaka asks nuns if the five senses and the mental organ, their six objects and six corresponding states of consciousness are permanent, as well as the oil, the wick, the flame and the light of an oil-lamp, and the root, the trunk, the branches and the foliage of a Pithy tree. Their answer is in the negative. Finally he quotes a case of a clever cattle butcher who dissects a cow with a sharp knife, without spoiling the flesh inside and the outer hide, and takes out the tendons, sinews and ligaments. He compares the knife to a noble intuitive wisdom which analyses the six internal and the six external sense fields to take away defilements, fetters and bonds.

3. In the *Milindapañha* [20] (Milinda's questions), Nāgasena, a Buddhist master, says to the Bactrian king Menandros who reigned during the 2nd century BC, in the North-West of India: "Nāgasena is only a name, since no person is found". [21] The king asks him who the agent of actions is. The master asks him if the hair, the head, the hairs of the body, the nails, the teeth, the skin, the flesh, the sinews, the bones, the marrow, the kidneys, the heart, the liver, the membranes, the spleen, the lungs, the intestines, the mesentary, the stomach, the excrement, the bile, the phlegm, the pus, the blood, the sweat, the fat, the tears, the serum, the saliva, the mucus, the synovic fluid, the urine or the brain in the head are Nāgasena. Is Nāgasena material shape, feeling,

perception, the habitual tendencies, or is he separate from these five aggregates? The king says no, but cannot believe that Nāgasena does not exist and wonders if he is telling a lie.

Then Nāgasena asks the king about the chariot in which he came. Is each of its components, the pole, the axle, the wheels, the body, the flag pole, the yoke, the reins, the goad, the chariot? Are all of these parts the chariot? Is the chariot apart from these parts? The king says no. Then Nāgasena says: "the chariot is only a sound" and wonders if the king lies. So the king is obliged to admit that "the chariot exists (merely) as a name". Then Nāgasena concludes that "according to the highest meaning, the person is not found here" and quotes the verses of the nun Vajrā that we have seen already:

> Just as when the parts are rightly set,
> The word "chariot" is spoken.
> So when there are the aggregates,
> It is the convention to say 'being'. [22]

Next day Nāgasena refutes the Greek concept of person presented by three Greeks (Antiochos etc.) as the life principle (*jīva*) or the breath (*vāta*, wind), *ātman* (Skt) or *attan* (Pāli) corresponding to the Greek *atmos* breath or wind giving life to the body. [23] He refuses also to consider the consciousness (*vijñāna*, Skt) as a unifying principle of the human being, because for him it is only a mental organ which discerns phenomena experimentally.

According to the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* II, 94–95, [24] the Buddha prefers his disciples to consider the body as himself rather than the mind, because the body persists for one years or a hundred years, but what we call thought, mind or consciousness "arises as one thing, ceases as another, by night or by day" as a monkey seizes one bough after another. This is a viewpoint radically different from the Cartesian *cogito, ergo sum* (I think, therefore I exist.)

The *Majjhima-nikāya* I notes that the Buddha considered as "lacking in reason" the viewpoint supposing the existence of the *ātman*, because it cannot be found. [25]

Concerning the identity of a man whose rebirth takes place after his death, Nāgasena says: "he is not the same and he is not another". [26] He is as a baby grown up into an adult, as a flame of an oil lamp in each moment, and as milk turned into curds, then into butter and into ghee. [27]

And finally appeared the *anattā* or *anātman* thesis, the thesis of the non-existence of the self in *Āgama* in Sanskrit [28], which Vasubandhu will quote later in the *Chapter against the thesis of the Self* (*Ātmavādapratisedhaprakaraṇa* Skt, *Powopin*, in Chinese *Hagahin*, in Japanese) of his *Abhidharmakosha bhāṣya*. (ca. AD 4th century). [29]

The Buddha is said to have preached as follows for Brahman Bādari:

> Neither sentient being nor *ātman* do exist (*nāstīha sattva ātmā ca*),
> Only exists the Law of dependent origination, that is to say the twelve links.
> When I think in detail of all the world of aggregates,
> the person doesn't exist. (*pudgalo nopalabhyate*.)
> I consider already that their inside is void.
> Their outside is also void. [30]

Let us note that Mahāyāna Buddhists consider that this Law of dependent origination is void of substance, i.e. has no actual existence in itself, even though phenomena take place in accordance with it.

III. Mahāyāna Texts: *Vajracchedikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra, Madhyamaka-śhāstra, Mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra* (in the South edition in Chinese)

The *Vajracchedikā prajñāpāramitā sūtra* (*sūtra* of perfect wisdom which cuts as a thunderbolt or a diamond), called the *Diamond sūtra*, belongs to the group of about forty *Prajñāpāramitā sūtras*. It insists on the vacuity of all phenomena and is one of the most ancient Mahāyāna texts.

Starting from the orthodox doctrine of *anattā*, "the *sūtra* develops the consequence of saying all things are void of self". [31] In this *sūtra* it is said:

> He is not to be called a Bodhisattva in whom the perception of a *self* or a *being* would take place, or the perception of *living principle* or a *person*. [32]

According to Edward Conze, the "self" (*ātman*) is "the supposed centre around which our own belongings are organised." A "being" (*sattva*) is a separate individual. The living principle or soul (*jīva*) is the "vivifying and unifying force within each organism". A "person" (*pudgala*) is a "being", that is "looked at from the outside, as a social entity". [33]

The *sūtra* says also:

> The Tathāgata teaches, "selfless are all *dharmas*, insubstantial, without a living principle, without personality". [34]

Nāgārjuna (*ca.* 150–250 AD [35], who gave a theoretical foundation to Mahāyāna Buddhism, treated this problem in chapter XVIII *Examination of the self* (*Ātmaparīkṣhā*) and in some other chapters of his *Madhyamaka-kārikā* (The Stanzas of the Middle). [36]

At the beginning of the 7th century, Candrakīrti comments on it in his *Prasannapadā Madhyamakavṛtti* (Commentary on the Treatise of the Middle in Clear Terms), [37] quoting the *Aryathatāgataguhyasūtra* as words of the Buddha.

> Not to give birth to the self, the "being", the soul, the individual (*pudgala*) and the false viewpoint, is to understand the false viewpoint on the personality, and this is the vacuity. [38]

And he demonstrates, in his commentary to Chapter XXII, *The Examination of the Tathāgata*, that *pudgala* (person) does not exist even if one examines it in five ways. [39]

The theories of *ātman* and *anātman* are both "skilful ways" (*upāyāh*) to save ordinary men from errors. Neither *ātman* nor *anātman* are the truth. This is the point of view of Kumārajīva, translator of the *Madhyamaka-śhāstra* into Chinese, and of Candrakīrti, commentator on the *Madhyamaka-kārikā*.

Guy Bugault explains clearly Nāgārjuna's work in his *L'Inde pense-t-elle?*:

> Everything that comes into existence results from a combination of conditions and this rule suffers no exception.... Nāgārjuna asks only to be shown '*what* comes to existence (ch. 1), *what* transmigrates (ch. 16), in short the *subject* which becomes'. But such an identity, when one searches for it in living beings (*sattva*) or in things (*bhāba* and also *dharma*), is unthinkable or cannot be found. The being in question vanishes under the acuteness of the look. In a sense, is *nirvāṇa* anything else? His dialectical virtuosity is itself merely *upāya-kauśhalya*, a therapeutic skilfulness. [40]

After the Madhyamaka school (*Mādhyamika*), those practising Yoga (*Yogacāra*, formed the "doctrine of consciousness only' (*vijñapti-mātratā*). [41] Following their experience during concentration (*samādhi*), their consciousness perceived images without senses. They thought that all experiences came from the inner consciousness which they call

ālaya-vijñāna, receptacle (or grain) which conserves and carries *karman*, heritage, memory and character, and which are nevertheless void of substance.

Vasubandhu accepted this doctrine, and developed the theory of *Tathāgatagarbha* (the womb or embryo of *Tathāgata* = the Buddha) which means the possibility of becoming a *"Buddha"* (p.p. of *budh* = to wake up, to understand, therefore the enlightened one) [42] and the theory of the Buddha Nature. (He wrote the *Treatise on the Buddha Nature* in the 4th century AD.)

The *Tathāgatagarbha* theory was developed in the Mahāyāna *Parinirvāṇa sūtra* relating the death of the Buddha. [43] The South edition of its Chinese translation insists on the permanent and imperishable nature of *Tathāgata* and calls it "the self" causing some confusion with the *ātman*.

> One preaches that all the *dharmas* are without Self, but it doesn't mean no existence of the Self. Who is the Self? If a *dharma* is substantial, true, constant, a chief, a support and if its nature does not change, one names it the Self. [44]

"The self" in the heart of living beings is called *Tathāgatagarbha*:

> The Self is the *Tathāgata* and *garbha*. All beings have the Buddha Nature. It is the Self. This Self is hidden originally, covered always by innumerable desires. That is why they cannot see it. [45]

It is the Buddha Nature or *Nirvāṇa*, "*Nirvāṇa* being without self and free, one names it the Great Self". In China they call it also "*the True Self*" and distinguish it from an "*illusory self*". [46]

It seems to be a return to the *ātman* (or *Brahman*), but this Great Self, for Mahāyāna Buddhists, is only a conventional name, given to reality void of substance, which is Vacuity and *Nirvāṇa*.

IV. Confrontation with practice

The exercise of Zen consists in sitting as Buddha to discover the Buddha Nature in us, in realising the enlightenment and in deepening this experience. While studying the *Shōbōgehzō zuimonki* (notes taken by Ejô while listening to the oral teaching of Dōgen) (written in 1234/5–8), the *Gakudō yōjin shū* (Pieces of advice for the study of the Way) (1234) and the *Shōbōgenzō* of the Zen master Dōgen, who read all these Buddhist texts and founded a Zen monks' community, we notice that he practised and taught to his disciples the fundamental teachings of the Buddha as well as the developed theory of the Self.

Ejō notes in his *Shōbōgenzō zuimonki* that his master repeatedly recommended to disciples to free themselves from their attachment to the idea of "I", "me" or "mine", by contemplating the impermanence of phenomena. [47] Dōgen writes in his *Gakudōyōjinshiū*:

> If this idea of "I" emerges, sit down calmly and observe. Among what we possess inside and outside of our body, what can be considered as originally ours? We receive our body, hair and skin from our parents. Their red and white drops [48] are, from beginning to the end, void of substance. So they are not us. The heart, the volition, the consciousness, the wisdom, the breath which we breathe in and out and which maintains our life, what are they finally? They are not us. [49]

He applies thus the method of dissection as in other Buddhist texts.

In the tome *Genjōkōan* (The truth accomplished now) (1233) of the *Shōbōgenzō*, Dōgen sums up his teaching in the famous formula:

> Learning the Buddha's way is learning who is the Self.
> Learning who is the Self is to forget ourselves. [50]
> To forget ourselves is to be enlightened by ten thousand *dharmas*. [51]
> To be enlightened by ten thousand *dharmas* means to let our own body and heart and the other's own body and heart get rid of the attachments. [52]

His words describe the ethical evolution of the Buddha Nature in us working progressively to realise itself not only for itself but also for others.

V. Conclusion

We have seen how the self and the person have been treated in some Buddhist texts of different periods and how the notions concerning them have evolved. But we notice two constant tendencies: men's attachment to the individual and egotistic self is always discouraged, while their effort to find out their true self (the Buddha Nature) and to realise it (*Nirvāṇa*) is encouraged, this self being considered, nevertheless, void of substance.

This distinction between two selves is merely a skilful way of leading people to *Nirvāṇa*. For fifteen centuries innumerable Buddhists have practised *samādhi* in this spirit and have realised enlightenment, by sitting as calmly and concentrated as the Buddha.

The Buddhists consider the phenomenal and individual person as an illusion and they would have many difficulties in understanding the Platonic and Christian notions of "person".

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NOTES

[1] An earlier version of this paper was delivered at the Second Conference of the European Society for Asian Philosophy, held at Exeter University, U.K. in August 1995.

[2] TEDESCI, P. (1947) *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 67, pp. 172–177.

[3] PĀLI TEXT SOCIETY (Eds) (1950) *Saṃyutta-nikāya* I, p. 135, DAVIDS, RHYS (Transl.) P.T.S. partly modernised. Series: The Book of the Kindred Sayings. *SN* I, p. 170. For Pāli texts quoted in this article, references are to texts edited and translated by the Pāli Text Society of London.

[4] *SN* I, p. 112, G.

[5] OLDENBERG, HERMANN and PISCHEL, RICHARD (Eds) (1966) *The Thera- and Therīgāthā* London, P.T.S.) p. 133.

[6] *SN* IV, pp. 400–401.

[7] NAKAMURA, HAJIME *Jiga to muga* (see below note 10) pp. 116–117. Other schools deriving from Vātsīputrīya are Dharmottarīa, Bhadrayānīya, Sammatīya and Sannagarika.

[8] P.T.S., *Ddhammapada* 277, 278, 279 (No. 5, 6, 7 of the ch. XX *Maggavaggo*), edited by SŪRIYAGOḌA SUMAṄGALA THERA 1914, p. 40. *Majjhima-nikāya*, I, p. 228. *SN* II, III, p. 132, XXII, Section 90. Translation, *SN* III, p. 112, *sankhāra* = all things which have been made by pre-existing causes. Pāli Text Society (1979) *Pāli-English Dictionary* (London) P.T.S. p. 665.

[9] WALPOLA R., p. 85, translated here from the French edition.

[10] NAKAMURA, H. (Ed.) (1986) Introduction, *The Idea of Anattan*, (Kyōto, Heiraku-Shoterū).

[11] *SN* I, text edited by FEER, LÉON (1960) t. I, III, 1–8, p. 75 G./*Udāna*, text edited by WOODWARD, F. L. (1977), Vol. 1, p. 275.

[12] *Dhammapada*, 80, 145, 305, 322; *Dīgha-nikāya*, III, p. 275, *Theragāthā*, 1098, *Thera and Therī-gāthā*, p. 98, *Dhammapada*, 103, 104, 105.

[13] Nakamura, p. 34.

[14] Candrakīrti: *Prasannapadā*, ch. XVIII, 11. JONG, J. W. (Transl.) (1949) *Cinq chapitre de la Prasannapàdā* (Paris, Lib. Orientale Paul Geuthner), pp. 15–21.

[15] For example the *Vinayapiṭaka* des Theravādin, Siamese edition, Vol. IV, p. 28; A. Bareau, *Bouddha*, p. 114; *Majjhima-nikāya* I. 135–136; BUGAULT, G. (1994) *L'Inde pense-t-elle?* ch. IX; *Logique et dialectique chez Aristotie et chez Nāgārjuna* (Paris, PUF) p. 266.

[16] NAKAMURA, p. 76.

[17] *SN* IV, Section 165. Translation (series: The Books of the Kindred Sayings) *SN* IV, p. 93.

[18] IV, 195, XXXV, iv, 5, Section 205 (9). Translation by P. L. WOODWARD (series: The Book of the Kindred Sayings) *SN* IV, *The Salāyatana Book*, pp. 128–130.

[19] *MN* III, No. 146, *Nandakovādasutta*, pp. 272–275. HORNER, I. B. (Transl.) (1954) *An Exhortation from Nandaka*, pp. 324–327.

[20] In Pāli, *Milindapañhā* (feminine), title adopted in Burma and Thailand. In Sri Lanka it is in the masculine: *Milindapañho*, cf. HAYASHIMA, KYŌSEI, *Discussed points on Self and non-Self in Milinda-pañha* in NAKAMURA: *Jiga to muga*, p. 425. The Pāli text was edited by V. TRENCKNER in London in 1880. This dialogue was composed roughly between 1st century BC and 1st. century AD in the North-West of India, in the region governed by King Meñandros in ca. 2nd century BC then was translated later into Pāli.

[21] *Milinda* I (25). Translation of the TRENCKNER edition by HORNER, I. B. (1963) is available in the series *Sacred Books of the Buddhists*, (London Luzac) *"na h'ettha puggalo upalabhatīti."* Upalab-hati = upa + labh = obtain to find. Passive, *upalabhati* = to be found or got = to exist (see Pāli Test Society, English Dictionary, p. 146).

[22] *Milinda* I, (25–28), Translation I, p. 34–38.

[23] *Milinda* I, (30–31), Translation I, p. 41.

[24] *SN* II, pp. 94, XII, 7, Section 61, (1); Translation, *SN* II, pp. 65–66, cf. *SN* II, 62. *Nidāna* Section 37 (7). Translation, *SN* II, p. 44.

[25] The *Alagaddūpamasutta* quoted in the *Majjhima-nikāya* I. P.T.S. p. 138. "Oh, monks, when neither ātman nor anything belonging to the ātman can be truly and really found, this speculative viewpoint: 'this universe is the ātman; after dying I will become what is permanent, staying, lasting, not liable to change, and I will exist like that for eternity', isn't it, oh, monks, purely and simply lacking in reason?" cf. G. BUGAULT, p. 299. P.T.S., (1954) *The Middle Length Sayings*. I I. B. HORNER (Transl.) p. 177.

[26] *Milinda*, I, (40), Translation, I, p. 54.

[27] *Milinda*, I, (40–41), Translation, I, pp. 55–56.

[28] *Āgama* (Skt) means text or scripture and is a collective name given to all the sayings about the acts and teachings of Buddha, summed up in short sentences, memorised and transmitted orally by many primitive Buddhist scholars in either Sanskrit, Prakrit (Indian dialect) or Pāli. The five *nikāyas* of Theravāda in Pāli are well conserved. Others, translated in Chinese or in Tibetan, are partially conserved. MAEDA, KEIGAKU (1985) in *Butten kaidai jiten* (2nd edn) (Tokyo, Shunjūsha) pp. 60–62.

[29] *Vasubandhu et Yaçomitra, IIIe chapitre de l'Abhidharma koça—kārikā, bhāsya et vyākhyā*, texte établi par Louis de la Vallée Poussin. London. Kegan. Trench. Trubner, 1914–1918, p. 137. *Abhi*, ch. III, 18, pp. 137–138 VALLÉEE POUSSIN, L. DE LA (Transl.) (1926) *L'Abhidharmakosha de Vasubandhu IIIe chapitre* (Paris, P. Geuthner) 18a, pp. 56–57. "L'ātman auquel vous croyez, une entité qui abandonne les *skandhas* d'une existence et prend les *skandhas* d'une autre existence, un agent intérieur, un Puruṣa, cet ātman n'existe pas. Bhagavat a dit en effet: "L'acte est (8a), le fruit est; mais il n'est pas d'agent...", *Abhidharmakosha-bhāsya* = *Jushilun* (in Chinese), *Kusharon* (in Japanese).

[30] NAKAMURA, pp. 79–80, *Sphutārthā Abhidharmakoshavyākhyā*, edited by U. WOGIHARA, p. 704 (Chinese edition). *Kandō Abhidharma kusharon* (Japanese), t. 29, 15 left. The translation is from Chinese text. The lines quoted here are not in the Pāli text.

[31] CONZE, EDWARD (Ed. and Transl.) (1974) *Vajrachedikā prajñapāramitā*. Serie Orientale Roma XIII, (Roma, Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente), p. 11.

[32] Ibid., 3, pp. 66–67, text in Sanskrit, p. 29.

[33] Ibid., p. 10, Conze translates *jiva* as "living soul".

[34] Ibid., 17 f, translation p. 84, p. 49. "*Tathāgato bhāṣate: nirātmānaḥ sarvbo- dharmā niḥ sattvāḥ nirjīvā niṣpudgalāḥ sarva dharmā iti.*"

[35] See URYUZU, RYŪSHIN (1985) *Nāgūrjuna kenkyū* (Study on Nāgārjuna). (Tokyo, Shunjūsha) BUGAULT, GUY *L'Inde pense- t-elle?* (ch. VIII Nāgārjuna pp. 213-236).

[36] The short pieces of verse of Nāgārjuna: (*Mūla*) *Madhyamaka-kārikā* was edited and commented by Piṅgala in the 4th Century AD under the title of *Mādhyamika'shāstra.* It was translated into Chinese by Kumāraj in 149 AD. *Zhongguanlun* (in Chinese), *Chūkanron* (in Japanese). (kārikā = concise statements in verse of doctrines).

[37] MAY, JACQUES (Ed. and Transl.) (1959) *Candrakirti, Prasannapadā Madhyamakavṛitti* (Paris, A. Maisonneuve), pp. 5-22.

[38] Translated into English by DE JONG, J. W. (1949) *Cinq chapitres de la Prasannapadā* (Paris, P. Geuthner) ch. XVIII, pp. 20-21.

[39] DE JONG, pp. 73-85.

[40] G. BUGAULT, ch. IX, pp. 317, 302 and 318.

[41] Mādhyamika and Yogacāra were two main schools of Mahāyāna Buddhism.

[42] Introduction of Akira Hirakawa. *Buttenkaidai jiten*, pp. 20-21. cf. TAKASAKI, JIKIDŌ, (1974) *The Formation of the Theory of Tathāgatagarbha.* A Study on the Indian Buddhist Thought of Mahāyāna. (in Japanese). Tokyo, Shjunjūsha, (Doctorate Thesis).

[43] The text in Sanskrit was translated into Chinese by Tanwushi. The North edition consists of forty volumes and the South edition of thirty six volumes. It is the equivalent of the *Mahāparinibbānasuttanta* in Pāli of Theravāda, but is not the same.

[44] South edition in Chinese, II chapter of Lamentation.

[45] Ibid. South edition. VIII on The Nature of Tathāgata.

[46] Quoted in Chinese by NAKAMURA p. 141, note 2.

[47] KOUN, EJŌ (1995) *Shōbgenzō zuimonki*, Chōenji edition, MIZUNO YAHOKO (Ed.), Series Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei 81, (Tokyo, Iwanami-shoten), II, 12, 16; III, 8, 12; IV 2, 3; VI, 10, 21.

[48] "The drops of their inseminating liquid", according to Toshio Shinohara's commentary on *Gakudō yōjinshū*; Tokyo, Daitō shuppansha, 1990, p. 41.

[49] *Dōgen zenji zenshū* (The Whole Works of Zen Master Dōgen), OKUBO DŌSHŪ (Ed.) Tokyo, Chikumashobō, 1970, p. 254.

[50] Dōgen uses the Japanese word *"ware"* to mean Self and oneself.

[51] In *Bendōwa* (A Talk on Practising the Way) of his *Shōbōgenzō*, Dōgen describes a man's enlightenment as a symphony with all the elements of nature. When a man practising *zazen* has discovered the Buddha Nature in him and is awakened to the truth (enlightened), all the elements of the Universe (*dharma*) realise the enlightenment communicate and become one with him. '*Dōgenzenji zenshū*, pp. 731-732. NISHIO, M., KAGAMIJIMA, G., SAKAI, J. (Eds) *Shōbogenzō*. Nihonkotenbungaku taikei 81. Tokyo. Iwanami- shoten, pp. 74-76. *Shōsuru* (Japanese) = *satoru* (Japanese) = *badh* (Skt) = to wake up, to understand.

[52] *Dōgenzenji zenshū*, pp. 7-8. N.K.S. edition mentioned p. 102. Dōgen in *Hōkyōki*, recounts his Chinese Zen master Rujing's answer to his question on *"shinjin datsuraku"* (the heart and body being detached): "It means zazen. When you sit down only for its self, you detach yourself from the five desires (of fortune, lust, eating, renown and sleep) and eliminate the five obstacles (avidity, anger, massive indolence, arrogance–evil-doing or repentance and doubt)".

The Final Stages of Purification in Classical Yoga

IAN WHICHER

ABSTRACT   *This paper attempts to clarify the processes undergone by the yoga practitioner in the later stages of purification according to the classical Yoga of Patañjali. Through a process termed the sattvification of consciousness, the mental processes of the yogin are remolded, reshaped and restructured leading to a transformation of the mind and its functioning. The mind thus can be seen not only as a vehicle of spiritual ignorance, but of liberating knowledge culminating in authentic identity. Yoga philosophy, far from negating or suppressing human nature, has profound implications for psychological improvement and an embodied understanding of freedom and human integrity.*

Introduction

According to the classical Yoga tradition, one of the practical aims of Yoga is to generate and strengthen the nonafflicted mental processes (*aklişta-vŗttis*) and mental impressions (*saṃskāras*) which help to eradicate the impurities of the mind rooted in error (*viparyaya*) and its five parts, namely, the afflictions (*kleśas*) [1].As long as the afflictions are in place, a human being is ineluctably oriented toward experiences in the limited realms of 'matter' (*prakŗti*). The five *kleśas* (see below for listing) are the motivational matrix of the unenlightened mind. The cultivation of discipline in Yoga gives rise to sattvic virtues such as friendliness (*maitrī*) toward other beings, non-violence (*ahiṃsā*), compassion (*karuņā*) and so forth. As ignorance (*avidyā*) is gradually replaced by knowledge (*vidyā*), attachment (*rāga*), aversion (*dveşa*), and so on, will also be replaced by their opposites, through their inevitable linking together by the mental impressions (*saṃskāras*). *Saṃskāras* of benevolence, dispassion, and the like, in opposition to their corresponding impurities, will, in their turn, counter the influence of ignorance and its web of afflictions (i.e. egoity/I-am-ness, attachment, aversion, desire for continuity/fear of death) contributing in this manner to an increasing light of knowledge [2], an illumination of consciousness.

Thus, yogic disciplines culminating in *samādhi* are designed to bring about and foster those *saṃskāras* that can eventually subdue and eliminate the afflictions, gradually assuring an undisturbed 'flow' of the mind towards liberation [3]. The more positively impregnated mental activities (*vŗttis*) produce sattvic impressions and these in turn give rise to a different, positively transformed mental activity (*aklişta-vŗtti*) that will then produce new impressions, and so on [4]. The yogin's personality likewise becomes transformed—meaning that it becomes morally and cognitively purified of the binding effects of activity (*rajas*) and inertia (*tamas*). The yogin develops a clarity of knowledge through which *prakŗti* is increasingly appropriated in a nonconflicting and unselfish manner. Purity of the *sattva* implies a mastery over *rajas* and *tamas* and their identity-constricting influences (i.e. attachments, aversions), and consists in a dispassion toward what is perceived and experienced. Purity (*śuddhi*) generally stands for purity of the

mental *sattva* [5], even though the yogin's final 'step' is that of becoming free from the influence of the *guṇas* in their entirety and hence also from *sattva* [6]. In this way Yoga seeks to give, in the words of Pensa:

> ... an analytical and "scientific" explanation ... predominant in Indian religion, according to which true knowledge has such a totally transforming effect on the individual as to release him from the *saṃsāra*. Terms such as knowledge, purification, *samādhi*, liberation, are thus all very closely related and interdependent; but this intimate association and reciprocity could not be had outside the connective tissue represented by the *saṃskāras* and their law [7].

After considerable journeying on the 'path' of Yoga, the yogin seeks to attain an eventual 'victory' over *karma* in its form of spiritual ignorance (*avidyā*). Again, Pensa incisively states:

> Without such a victory there would be no sense in talking about freedom and absolute independence as the final result of the yogic *mārga*. Nevertheless— and here we have a vital point—if this victory-liberation is to be achieved, it must be "sown" continually in accordance with the iron logic of the basic law: liberation may be achieved only on condition that the mind (*citta*), through adequate depuration, be enabled to produce the necessary amount of karmic impulses [*saṃskāras*] endowed with the specific quality of giving rise in their turn to liberation [8].

The Sattvification of the Mind

In Yoga philosophy *saṃskāra* functions both as a binding influence in the form of ignorance and where *rajas* and *tamas* predominate, or as a liberating force in the form of knowledge (*jñāna*) residing in the *sattva* of the mind. As Pensa implies (see note 8), in its most sattvic form *saṃskāra* has a profound soteriological significance in Yoga. There are many levels at which the strength of worldly, afflicted *karma* is reduced. For example, there are many expiatory observances of prayer, ritual offerings, and meritorious acts that reduce the power of already existing karmic traits, habit patterns (*vāsanās*), predispositions, and *saṃskāras* by adding to the karmic residue (*karmāśaya*) the force of these thoughts and acts [9]. But these efforts do not free one from the entire bondage of *karma* and the inherent dissatisfaction within *saṃsāra* because there is still one's involvement as an egoic identity: the inclination toward dependence on further acts and attachment to the results of those acts (in the form of gainful award engendering happiness/pleasure or loss generating sorrow, pain and aversion) still remains. The true yogic sacrifice—the 'interiorised' or 'spiritualised' sacrifice (*yajña*)— of egotism itself (as proclaimed, for example, by the early Upaniṣadic sages) [10] must be distinguished in Yoga from 'external' or extrinsic forms of sacrifice or ritual which, motivated from a basic misconception of self rooted in a selfish mentality and desirous of material or spiritual gain, are clearly inefficacious for bringing about spiritual emancipation [11].

The perceptual knowledge attained in the stage of cognitive *samādhi* (termed *samprajñāta*) helps to reveal our very identity or being which due to an epistemological error had seemingly become entangled and dispersed in the domain of matter, the prakṛtic realm. At the stage of *nirvicāra-samādhi* (*samādhi* without subtle associations) the knowledge that arises is said to be 'truth-bearing' (*ṛtaṃ-bharā*) [12]; the yogin has

attained a 'knowing-oneness' with the whole of manifest *prakṛti* (*mahat*), including the ability to know—through *siddhis* or 'powers' brought about by the application of *saṃyama* or 'constraint' (see below)—all of the various manifestations which arise out of *mahat*. At this stage the inner reflective awareness of self or I-sense has become pure, clear [13], and capable of contemplating its own true nature or essence. It is, however, only the lucidity and clarity made possible through the reflected presence of *puruṣa* in *asmitā-samādhi* that is intended here. Vijñāna Bhikṣu correctly points out that the word *tatra* ('therein') refers to *sabīja-samādhi* [14], and even there only to the subtlest of the *samādhis* 'with seed', namely *asmitā*-accompanied *samādhi*, the highest form of *nirvicāra* ecstasy. We must bear in mind that *all* forms of cognitive *samādhi* are experiential states that involve objects or mental content and in which misidentification of self is only partially transcended; still contained within the mind is the 'seed' of ignorance, further confusion and sorrow that can 'sprout' at any time, destabilising, as it were, the yogin's developed state of onepointedness. From a different perspective, the forms of cognitive *samādhi* can be regarded as yogic means for obtaining particular knowledge of *prakṛti* and her manifestations or actualisations through the capacity of the mind for epistemic oneness with the object of support and contemplation [15]. At the most subtle awakening in *samprajñāta*, the yogin is able through discriminative discernment (*vivekakhyāti*) to distinguish between the finest aspect of *prakṛti*—the *sattva* of the mind—and *puruṣa*. This highly refined discernment gives rise to sovereignty (*adhiṣṭhātṛtva*) over all states of *prakṛtic* existence and omniscience, that is, 'knowingness'/ 'knowledge of all' (*jñātṛtva*) [16].

Patañjali goes on to state: "The *saṃskāra* born of that [truth-bearing insight] obstructs other *saṃskāras*" [17]. Turning to Vyāsa on this *sūtra* we are informed that:

> Upon the yogin's attainment of insight arising from *samādhi*, a fresh *saṃskāra* made by that insight is produced. The *saṃskāra* generated by the truth-bearing insight obstructs the accumulated residue of the *saṃskāras* of emergence (worldly, afflicted identification). When the *saṃskāras* of emergence are overcome, the ideas and intentions arising from them no longer occur. With the cessation of these ideas, *samādhi* presents itself. Then there is insight arising from the *samādhi*; from that, more *saṃskāras* are generated from the insight. Thus a fresh deposit of such *saṃskāras* is built up. From that again [is generated] insight which in turn produces more *saṃskāras* of insight. Why would this new accumulation of *saṃskāras* not draw the mind into an [afflicted] involvement with it? It is because the *saṃskāras* generated by insight cause the destruction of the afflictions, and so do not constitute anything that would involve the [afflicted] mind. In fact, they cause the mind to cease from its [afflicted] activity. Indeed, the mind's [afflicted] endeavour terminates in knowledge [18].

As the impressions (*saṃskāras*) generated by *samādhi* gather force and are renewed on a regular basis through practice (*abhyāsa*), the impressions of emergence (*vyutthāna*)—which are rooted in and add to an extraverted or extrinsically oriented sense of self—weaken. The 'old', former residue (*āśaya*) of the mind constituting the deposits of afflicted, worldly *karma* and *saṃskāras* is gradually replaced with regularly replenished new impressions of *samādhi* generating insight (*prajñā*), i.e. yogic perception (*yogi-pratyakṣa*) which again reinforces the impressions or *saṃskāras* of *samādhi*. Thus the past habitual pattern or cycle of egoically appropriated *vṛttis* and afflicted impressions (*saṃskāras*) is broken. Due to the fact that these impressions of insight are of the

nonafflicted (*akliṣṭa*) [19], sattvic kind, they do not generate any further afflictions in that they do not add to the rajasic and tamasic qualities or predispositions of the mind that would perpetuate misidentification as in the situation of *vyutthāna*, the extrinsic mode of human identity.

What *YS* I.50 indicates, at least from a soteriological perspective, is the fruit of the 'truth-bearing' (*ṛtambharā*) insight (*prajñā*). As the mind becomes purified of affliction—including the *saṃskāras* and personality traits (*vāsanās*) which sustain affliction—it becomes capable of a steady 'flow' towards the 'good' meaning a 'flow' of discernment [20] from which an identity shift can take place, an identity shift involving a transformation of consciousness from a mistaken, saṃsāric identity in *saṃyoga* to authentic or true identity or 'form' (*svarūpa*) as *puruṣa*. The starting point of this discernment may be, as Vyāsa suggests, a questioning of one's individual identity, pondering on one's state of being by dwelling on questions such as, "Who have I been?" and "What shall we become?" [21] However, one must go beyond this initial inquiry in order to experience the rarefied consciousness of pure *sattva*, which by transcending the individual consciousness, discloses discerning knowledge: "The one who sees the distinction [between extrinsic and intrinsic self-identity] discontinues the cultivation of self-becoming". [22]. Having confused true identity for empirical or prakṛtic selfhood by conforming (*sārūpya*) to the changing nature of *vṛtti*, one must then attain the discriminative discernment reflected in the pure, finest *sattva* of the mind (*citta*). In this achievement of knowledge the generation of the false or misidentified sense of self ceases. One no longer has any need to ask questions from the perspective of a confused person who upon seeking liberation remains ensconced in his or her own spiritual dilemma. As Patañjali goes on to inform us, the mind thus inclined toward higher perception (i.e. discrimination = *viveka*) has a definite propensity for the liberated state of 'aloneness' (*kaivalya*) [23].

Impressions based on the clarity and stability of knowledge in *samādhi* have the power to remold, reshape, and restructure the psychological and epistemological functioning of the mind. As a result of these *saṃskāras* of insight, the new cycle or 'wheel' of *saṃskāra-vṛtti-saṃskāra* breaks the former 'beginningless' (*YS* IV.10) cycle of saṃsāric identity by impeding, and therefore helping to remove, the worldly, afflicted *saṃskāras* of *vyutthāna*. They prevent their effects (and affects), namely the *vṛttis* of extrinsic identity or worldly identification, rendering them ineffective, obsolete, incapable of functioning. Neither Patañjali nor Vyāsa state exactly why the *saṃskāras* of insight (*prajñā*) annul the appearance of other *saṃskāras*. Bhoja Rāja explains the ability and strength given to this type of *saṃskāra* by the fact that the insight which engenders it is in direct 'contact' or alignment with the real nature or 'thatness' (*tattva*) of existence [24], implying an innate order or balance in life. This alignment—comprised of knowledge structured in the mind (consciousness) in the form of 'truth-bearing insight' (*ṛtambharā-prajñā*), cosmic and individual existence—is something that does not happen with other *saṃskāras* (of a *vyutthāna* nature) being as they are rooted in ignorance and disconnected from the real nature of existence (*atattva*, see note 24). A preponderance of the latter type of *saṃskāras* forces human identity to contract or 'fall' from the natural (intrinsic) order, harmony, and balance of life.

Clarifying Vyāsa, Vijñāna Bhikṣu [25] states that the regular practice and cultivation of *samprajñāta* leading to a series of insights (*prajñās*) confirms and strengthens its *saṃskāras* without which the *saṃskāras* of emergence (*vyutthāna*) will continue to arise. A single experience of *prajñā* alone does not thwart the *saṃskāras* of emergence, but the

opposing *saṃskāras* built up through sustained practice gradually attenuate [26] them. The mind's power to serve as a vehicle of ignorance and egoity is therefore weakened. Thus a pattern of *samādhi-prajñā-saṃskāra-samādhi* ensues. Through the *vṛttis* of higher perception (*yogi-pratyakṣa*) and their resultant *saṃskāras* of insight, the deluding power of ignorance and its regular pattern of *vyutthāna-saṃskāras* and *vṛttis* that normally exacerbate an afflicted sense of self diminish in power and are eventually expelled altogether.

Why does Patañjali say (*YS* I.50, see note 17 above) that it is the *saṃskāra* of the *prajñā* that obstructs the production of *vyutthāna-saṃskāras*, and not that it is the *prajñā* itself that does so? One plausible explanation of why Patañjali expresses himself in this way has to do with the importance that the *saṃskāra* is given at this point in the process of 'cessation' (*nirodha*). At this stage of *samādhi* the *saṃskāra* helps to generate and sustain insight (*prajñā*), and the existence of the *prajñā* presupposes that all other mental processes must have already subsided; at this moment of yogic praxis there cannot be the production of any afflicted type of *saṃskāras*. Patañjali is saying, according to our understanding, that it is the *saṃskāra* of the insight (*prajñā*) *as the cause* that checks the appearance of the other (*vyutthāna*) *saṃskāras*. It is not the *prajñā* itself as the effect that obstructs the effects of the residue of past action. The yogin is operating on the most subtle levels of *prakṛti*, in effect radically reordering the mind by changing the tendency of consciousness to generate identity captivated by the manifest realm as it has normally (and habitually) been understood, or rather misperceived. However, this is not as yet the final awakening in Yoga.

The goal in Patañjali's Yoga, as expressed in *YS* I.2 (Yoga is *cittavṛttinirodha*), is the utter cessation (*nirodha*) of the afflictions (*kleśas*) in the form of an afflicted, guṇic identity of self (*cittavṛtti*). It is Patañjali's understanding that insight (*prajñā*) and its *saṃskāras* are a necessary but not sufficient condition for the complete removal of ignorance and its effects (dissatisfaction = *duḥkha*). Thus *samādhi*, even at this subtle stage of practice, is still 'with seed' (*sabīja*). While *samprajñāta* arrests the *vyutthāna*-mode of selfhood, of egoic, worldly identification and experience (*bhoga*) [27]—experience being one of the purposes of the 'seeable' (*dṛśya*, *YS* II.18), *prakṛti* or the mind (*citta*)—the *saṃskāras* of insight foster the other purpose or assignment of the mind [28], which is liberation (*apavarga*) [29]. This involves nothing less than the final eradication or overcoming of *avidyā*'s hold over the mind, a 'grip' or monopolising power that is responsible for the superimposed condition of the 'failure-to-see' (*adarśana*) resulting in mistaken identity. Even *prajñā* and its impressions are not capable of overcoming or displacing the latent potential in the mind for epistemological distortion, selfish mentality, and afflicted activity. Insight (*prajñā*) itself is a quality or virtue of the *sattva* of the mind, a special cognition or *vṛtti* of knowledge (*jñāna*) made possible due to the reflected and increasingly intensified presence of *puruṣa*. What has taken place at this high level of purification may be referred to as the "sattvification of consciousness (i.e. the mind)". The locus of identity must, however, shift from the mind to *puruṣa*. The yogin is not satisfied simply with generating purer knowledge-type *saṃskāras*. As we will soon see, the yogin's goal is to cease to generate *any saṃskāras* at all, in effect, to transcend the whole saṃskāric mode of self-identity by terminating the remaining *saṃskāras*. Yet, we must ask, how can a mind that is being fuelled with the *saṃskāras* of insight in the experience of *samādhi* 'with seed', and therefore still under the influence of the afflictions, reach 'seedless' (*nirbīja*) *samādhi*?

Asaṃprajñāta-Samādhi (Enstasy)

After *samādhi* in the seeable/knowable and involving objects is attained and perfected, *samādhi* in the 'unknowable' or 'without the known' (*asaṃprajñāta*) can be cultivated. Ultimately, the stage of 'seedless' or 'objectless' (nonintentional, contentless) *samādhi* takes place in which all affliction and its effects are 'burned away', 'scorched', bringing about the total cessation (*nirodha*) of *puruṣa*'s "superimposed condition" (i.e. *cittavṛtti*). Transcending the stages of cognitive *samādhi*, all the potencies (*saṃskāras*) that form the root cause (i.e. ignorance = *avidyā*) of mistaken identity become purposeless, inactive, and dissolve from consciousness; and the consciousness of the 'knower' formerly directed to the objects of experience settles down in the pure knower (*puruṣa*) or experiencer for which there will be nothing then to be 'known' or 'experienced' soteriologically, that is, for the purpose of liberation. This *samādhi* is the supracognitive *samādhi*, *samādhi* in the autotransparent knower itself (i.e. the yogin's consciousness 'directed toward', 'merging in' and identified as *puruṣa*) which can never be an object of knowledge and is, in that sense, unknowable [30].

YS I.18 asserts: "The other [state] is preceded by the practice of the idea of discontinuation and has *saṃskāra* only as residue" [31]. Vyāsa refers to "the other" in the above as "*asaṃprajñāta samādhi*" [32]. This *sūtra* presupposes two questions: (1) What are the means to attain the supracognitive *samādhi*? (2) What is the nature of this *samādhi*? The phrase *virāma-pratyaya-abhyāsa-pūrvaḥ* ("preceded by the practice of the idea of discontinuation") answers the first question and is explained in different ways by the commentators. Vācaspati Miśra appears to support the notion that *virāma* refers to the absence of all *vṛttis*, implying here the ontological cessation of *vṛttis* [33]. Vijñāna Bhikṣu, who stresses an epistemological emphasis (*YV* I.18), declares that higher dispassion (*para-vairāgya*) rejects the knowledge or self-identifications (i.e. identification with *vṛttis* in *saṃprajñāta-samādhi*) as being insufficient. I understand Vijñāna Bhikṣu as saying that the meaning of *virāma-pratyaya* is the awareness of the termination of the misidentification with knowledge (*vṛtti*) [34]. Āraṇya explains that the practice of higher dispassion is itself *virāma-pratyaya* [35]. Bhoja Rāja suggests that the abandonment of all concern with *vitarka* and such supports is in itself *virāma-pratyaya* [36].

Both Vijñāna Bhikṣu and Vācaspati Miśra agree, however, that the practice of *virāma-pratyaya* means to enter repeatedly into a purer awareness than that engaged in cognitive *samādhi* [37]. The process involves, as Bhoja Rāja asserts, establishing this practice again and again, cultivating the mind in this way [38]. Āraṇya seems to imply that the practice is perfected when the identification with the *vṛtti* 'I am' from *asmitā* disappears [39]. In *asaṃprajñāta* there is no longer misidentification, indeed no longer any soteriological need for identification with objects of support or mental content as in cognitive *samādhi*. This higher *samādhi* is characterised by the presence of residual *saṃskāras* only (*saṃskāra-śeṣa*). Vyāsa states: "When all [misidentification with] the mental processes and content have subsided and only the *saṃskāras* remain as residue, such cessation (*nirodha*) is the supracognitive *samādhi*. The means to this *samādhi* is higher dispassion. The practice with supportive factors is ineffective as a means of attaining it" [40]. When even the *vṛttis* of sattvic knowledge revealed in cognitive *samādhi* are mastered and the yogin is detached from them, they are no longer fed or formed into *saṃskāras*. In *asaṃprajñāta*, the *saṃskāras* cease to generate *vṛttis* of misidentification or egoity and simply lie as inoperative residue.

Does *asaṃprajñāta* refer to a state of consciousness in which there is no cognition of

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any kind and therefore is to be rendered as 'unconscious' as has been suggested in some translations or interpretations? [41] Taking a more positive approach to the nature of *asamprajñāta*, S Dasgupta comments: "This state, like the other states of the *samprajñāta* type, is a positive state of the mind and not a mere state of vacuity of objects or negativity. In this state, all determinate character of the states disappears and their potencies only remain alive" [42]. G. Koelman asserts that: "Concentration [sic] without objective consciousness should not be conceived as total absence of knowledge; only knowledge by objectification is absent" [43]. Elsewhere, however, Koelman refers to *asamprajñāta* as "unconscious absorption" [44] which is somewhat misleading in that the yogin finally attains an awakening of consciousness that reveals intrinsic identity to be *puruṣa*. In this stage of *puruṣa*-realization, the yogin's consciousness is established in the true form of the seer, the being 'who' truly sees, is fully conscious (*cetana*). *Prakṛti* has no capacity to 'know' or be conscious of *puruṣa*. Yet this shortcoming on the part of prakṛtic existence including ordinary human consciousness in no way justifies our classifying of *asamprajñāta* as an 'unconscious' state. Formally speaking, the nonconscious (*acetana*) is reserved for *prakṛti*'s domain and any attempt to portray *puruṣa* as an unconscious state is, from the perspective of Yoga, unwarranted.

Vyāsa's commentary on *YS* I.2 specifies that when the last stain of *rajas* is removed, the mind becomes established in the knowledge that *sattva* and *puruṣa* are different. This statement should not be confused with the purpose of *YS* I.3. The term *nirodha* as used in *YS* I.2 explains the state of the *mind* during *asamprajñāta*, whereas *YS* I.3 tells us that intrinsic identity—the true form of Self (*puruṣa*)—is established in its own authentic nature, and this realisation of *puruṣa* takes place in *asamprajñāta*. Awareness as restricted to the mind (and which can include illuminating insight or discriminative discernment) is a *vṛtti*, but Self-awareness—the conscious principle (*puruṣa*)—is an immutable constant. Pure consciousness is not at all in the same category as the mental processes. The whole point of *asamprajñāta* is to dwell in the true nature of *puruṣa* which, if not Self-aware, would be nonexistent. If *asamprajñāta-samādhi* is construed merely as an unconscious state, then what would happen to the unchanging power of consciousness (*citiśakti*, *YS* IV.34)? The conscious principle—*puruṣa*, the seer—is the power of seeing (*YS* II.20), pure consciousness itself, and it is a mistake to proclaim this principle as unconscious in *asamprajñāta-samādhi*. *YS* I.18 only seems to contrast *enstasy*—*puruṣa* abiding in its true nature—with the ecstatic states outlined in *YS* I.17 not by indicating the true nature of *puruṣa* (as realised in *asamprajñāta*), but rather by explaining what happens to the mind after *asamprajñāta* takes place: simply that, according to Vyāsa, it receives *nirodha-saṃskāras* (see below for explanation). While it may be said that in *asamprajñāta* there is a temporary suspension of the mental processes as well as any identification with objects (i.e. the functioning of *vṛtti*), it would be misleading to conclude that higher *samādhi* results in a definitive cessation of the *vṛttis* in total predisposing the yogin to exist in an incapacitated, isolated or mindless state and therefore incapable of living a balanced, useful, and productive life in the world [45].

In *YS* I.51 the final stage in the process of *nirodha* is enumerated as follows: "With the cessation of even that [*saṃskāra* of *prajñā*], the cessation of everything else [i.e. all misidentification] ensues and that is seedless *samādhi*" [46]. Vyāsa explains:

> This (higher *samādhi*) not only opposes the (identification with) insight (attained in cognitive) *samādhi* but impedes even the *saṃskāras* generated by that insight. Why? Because the *saṃskāra* brought about by cessation (*nirodha*)

counteracts the *saṃskāras* generated by (cognitive) *samādhi*. The existence of *saṃskāras* being formed in the mind as a result of this cessation is inferred from the experience that the cessation remains steady for progressively longer periods of time. The mind [as a vehicle for ignorance], along with the *saṃskāras* of *samādhi* on external objects (i.e. emergence or externalization = *vyutthāna*) and the *saṃskāras* of cessation which lead one to liberation, are dissolved into their own original basis. Thus, the *saṃskāras* [of *nirodha*] do not cause the mind [in its previous state of ignorance] to continue to exist but prevent its involvement. Since that mind, no longer empowered, withdraws together with the *saṃskāras* (which lead to liberation), the *puruṣa* is established in its own true nature and is therefore called pure, alone and free or liberated [47].

In the above it has been understood that by the use of the term *vyutthāna*, referring to the extrinsic or attached modes of self, Vyāsa is including *samprajñāta-samādhi*, which in contrast to enstasy (*asamprajñāta*)—the topic of *YS* I.51—involves ecstatic experiences of identification that are yet 'external' to authentic identity (*puruṣa*). There still remain dependency factors of support that lie 'outside' the domain of true selfhood, in *prakṛti*'s realm, and prolong the yogin's susceptibility to the deeply embedded 'seeds' of ignorance (*avidyā*) that can germinate into further dissatisfaction (*duḥkha*). Up to the level of insight and self-mastery attained in *samprajñāta*, the term "*vyutthāna*" served as an antonym to *samādhi* (and *nirodha*) and denoted a 'movement' of the mind 'away' from *puruṣa* toward objects of perception, thereby generating an extrinsic identity of self, compulsive attachment to objects, and afflicted, worldly involvement. However, in contrast to enstasy ("standing or abiding in the Self"), it can be said that the ecstatic states of cognitive *samādhi* are also *vyutthāna*, that is, they arise within the context of prakṛtic experience and are based on an extrinsic identity or an 'externalised' or extrinsic nature and awareness of selfhood. The innermost core of Patañjali's Yoga constituting the climax of yogic purification is said to be *nirbīja* ('without seed'), in comparison with cognitive *samādhi*, which being classified as *sabīja* ('with seed'), is considered an exterior part (*bahiraṅga*) [48] of Yoga.

Asamprajñāta not only eliminates any dependency on insight (*prajñā*) as a basis for self-identity but also overcomes the *saṃskāras* of *prajñā*. All prakṛtic (guṇic) self-understanding persisting within the core of the mind (*citta*)—whether informed through corporeal or bodily identifications, whether in the form of affective, emotional, moral, cognitive or egoistic identities, memories or *saṃskāras* of former attachments (*rāga*), aversions (*dveṣa*) or fear of death and desire for continuity (*abhiniveśa*)—must all be transcended. The *YS* attests to contemplative experiences that cross the boundaries of ordinary human perception and initiate an exploration into an ontologically different mode of consciousness. In *asamprajñāta-samādhi* the yogin's quest for authentic identity deepens and is now focused directly on the disentangled, extricated, and undefiled presence of *puruṣa*, a liberating realisation resulting in the discovery of a trans-empirical and indestructible foundation of being; it is the recognition of a previously concealed, yet unchanging identity which is eternally pure (*śuddha*), 'alone' (*kevala*) and free (*mukta*) [49].

Vyāsa tells us that while 'cessation' (*nirodha*) overcomes any attachment to insight (*prajñā*), the *saṃskāras* of *nirodha* thus generated counteract the *saṃskāras* of insight. A single 'experience' or realisation of *asamprajñāta*, however, is unlikely to accomplish this task all at once. When regular practice undertaken with proper attention and

reverence is cultivated and strengthened over time [50], it causes an unbroken flow of calm or serenity in the mind and the final results accrue [51]. Vyāsa suggests that a calm flow of the mind arises only through sustained practice, which brings about the *saṃskāras* of *nirodha*, for initially the state of peacefulness in the mind can easily be unsteadied and overwhelmed by the *saṃskāras* of 'extroversion' or 'emergence' (*vyutthāna*) [52]. Only after the initial 'experiences' of *asaṃprajñāta* and through its transformative or 'maturing' effects on the mind can the transcendence of the identifications in the ecstatic levels of *saṃprajñāta* occur [53].

Asaṃprajñāta-samādhi, which initially coincides with a temporary stage of *puruṣa*-realisation, presupposes a total turnabout or *metanoia* of consciousness, a complete shift in identity and transformation of understanding. Contrary to what C. Pensa [54] writes, the supraconscious *samādhi* is ultimately the *only* avenue to recover an awareness of our transcendent identity and autonomous freedom as *puruṣa*. For only this transphenomenal state of *samādhi* can fully kindle a fire of enstatic transcendence that does not involve the once powerful habit pattern or trait (*vāsanā*) of egoity (*asmitā*). In *asaṃprajñāta*, counter-*saṃskāras* are generated based on *puruṣa*-realisation that gradually render obsolete all of the remaining types of *saṃskāras*. The yogin develops the 'habit' of entering into the state of pure identity as *puruṣa* by regularly ascending into supraconscious *samādhi*. The former 'habit' of egoic or saṃsāric identity is weakened when the yogin returns from *asaṃprajñāta* to the normal waking state of the mind. The 'eight limbs' of Yoga (*aṣṭāṅga*) outlined by Patañjali in the *Sādhana-Pāda* (*YS* II.29) [55] can be seen as aids in this progressive shift from egoity to *puruṣa*. Yet, in the final analysis, the afflictions (*kleśas*) are terminated not through any specific exercise, technique, attitude, behavior, or intention but solely by the dispassionate 'act' of de-identifying completely with any notion of our psychophysical being as constituting authentic identity, *puruṣa*.

The direct means to *asaṃprajñāta* is, as Vyāsa [56] makes clear, higher dispassion (*para-vairāgya*). The yogin must take the step of becoming utterly dispassionate toward [57] (detached from) the much esteemed yogic state of discernment (*khyāti*) (between the finest aspect of *prakṛti*—the *sattva*—and *puruṣa*) and the supreme knowledge and power that proceed from it [58]. Higher dispassion, according to Vyāsa, is the finest, most subtle limit of knowledge [59]; the yogin's thirst for liberating knowledge is quenched through knowledge of *puruṣa* as revealed in the last stage of insight (*prajñā*), which is said to be sevenfold [60]. Vyāsa specifies that knowledge of *puruṣa* (*puruṣa-jñāna*, *YS* III.35) is attained by performing *saṃyama* ('constraint') on the idea of *puruṣa* being, by nature, pure consciousness [61]. Vijñāna Bhikṣu notes that outside this particular *saṃyama* there is no other means given for direct perception of *puruṣa* [62]. Clarifying the nature of this high-level perception, Vyāsa discloses that it is *puruṣa* that sees this knowledge of itself (as the knower) when no other processes of apprehension or ideas arise in the mind [63]. It is the purest reflection of *puruṣa*, whereby *puruṣa* realises that it has no further need to look 'outside' of itself (in the act of reflection) for its liberation. The mind has temporarily attained fulfilment of what it had to do: to act as a vehicle for the liberating knowledge of *puruṣa* [64]. However, it is still subject to the 'seed' of *avidyā* and needs further purification. All *prajñā*, thus, is but a temporary state; it is not the purest state of knowing/seeing—that is, a permanent power belonging to the knower/seer, *puruṣa* alone.

The higher dispassion, as Vyāsa suggests, grows in stages. Upon returning from *asaṃprajñāta* to the waking state, the yogin observes the time that has elapsed and thereby infers that the state of *nirodha* (*niruddha*) has indeed occurred. It is important

to note that the state of mind being referred to here as *nirodha* (*niruddha*) is, formally speaking (*YB* I.1), the purest state of the mind which follows from the one-pointed state of mind (*ekāgra*) in cognitive *samādhi*. It is the accumulated force of the experiences of *nirodha* that creates impressions until dispassion develops to the utmost degree. If this were not so, the increased intensity and length of the enstatic 'experience' would not result. Thus, the yogin infers that both *nirodha* and its impressions do take place [65]. Having transcended all *vṛtti*-knowledge and mental content through higher dispassion, the *guṇas* no longer hold any epistemological power over the yogin. There is no memory (*smṛti*) carried over from the 'experience' in *asamprajñāta*.

Yet a question ensues: Since the *nirodha*-state of the mind (generated from *asamprajñāta*), not being a *vṛtti*, does not produce a corresponding idea, cognition (*pratyaya*), or insight, how is it possible for a *saṃskāra* of *nirodha* to form? One response to this query, given by H. Āraṇya, is that the flow of ideas and apprehensions exists before the experience of *nirodha* and continues after it. The break in that flow is recognised by the mind and this recognition constitutes the *nirodha-saṃskāra*. As these breaks occur more frequently and are prolonged through practice, the tendency to enter into the state of *nirodha* increases [66]. Finally, misidentification with the flow of ideas (*pratyaya*) and mental processes (*vṛtti*) permanently ceases and the yogin forever abides in the true enstatic nature of *puruṣa*, the seer (*YS* I.3). This supra-cognitive awareness must be cultivated under all conditions including during: (1) the 'formal' practice (*sādhana*) of *samādhi* in the meditative posture, and (2) ordinary involvement in the world. While performing all the necessary duties of the world—personal or otherwise—the yogin continues to reflect upon all knowledge (*vṛtti*) as it arises in the mind. The yogin then traces this 'flow' of knowledge back to the pure knower (*puruṣa*) of knowledge until the *saṃskāras* that formerly corrupted the attention needed for this purpose become so weakened that enstasy becomes increasingly integrated with the wakeful state. Up to this time the yogin's attention had been interrupted constantly by the prakṛtic identifications. But now after a profound journey of purification and illumination of understanding, the yogin, remaining alert, aware and open to the everyday world, finds repose in an uninterrupted, 'seedless' *samādhi* where identification with *vṛttis*, thoughts, emotions, relationships, etc., is recognised as a nonbinding association. Prior to *nirbīja-samādhi*, this trans-empirical awareness must be diligently cultivated by overcoming the *saṃskāras* of mistaken identity, attachment, and so on, including the objects and mental content that left their imprints in *samprajñāta-samādhi*. Bhoja Rāja describes it thus: As the yogin progresses through the stages of cognitive *samādhi*, the knowledge-*vṛtti* at each stage is dissolved into its own saṃskāric cause; as each *vṛtti* arises from a *saṃskāra*, the yogin discerns "not this, not this" (*neti neti*). Denying *vṛttis* any intrinsic worth, pure consciousness is pursued with greater intensity until the culminating state of 'seedless' *samādhi* is reached [67]. This view as articulated by Bhoja Rāja echoes an important teaching of the *Upaniṣads* [68].

The process of cessation (*nirodha*) results in an expansion of insight, self-understanding, and identity in *samādhi*, followed by a creative potency. *Nirodha* does not mean the destruction, suppression, or negation [69] for the yogin of the mental processes or the realm of the *guṇas* in total, as I have argued elsewhere [70]. It is not a deadening of the mind but entails a form of mental initiative that allows for a sattvification (i.e. purification and illumination) of consciousness (the mind). The final cessation of mistaken identity thus can be viewed as a positive process disclosing a finer attunement between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* and producing *saṃskāras* in no less fashion than is the case with the *vṛttis* [71]. However, as the *saṃskāras* of *nirodha* grow progressively more

intense, they end up turning, paradoxically, against any form of mental activity based on egoity, misidentification and ignorance, including their own existence. The consequence of all this can be none other than *kaivalya: puruṣa* entirely free shines with its own power of consciousness (*citiśakti*) [72]. The process of final cessation (*nirodha*) epitomises well the bipolarity of the yogic 'path' where both *abhyāsa* (i.e. the 'practice of the idea of discontinuation'—*virāma-pratyaya-abhyāsa*—of misidentification with *vṛtti*, YS I.18) and *para-vairāgya* (i.e. the higher dispassion which serves as the final means to enstasy) are the primary methods that the yogin must utilise in order to be properly prepared for the 'event' of liberation.

A brief summary of the process of *nirodha* as it passes through the various states of mind can now be formulated. In the following order of development, *nirodha* involves: (1) turning the mind away from external, grosser identifications resulting in restless, agitated, or rajasic (*kṣipta*) and dull, somnolent or tamasic (*mūḍha*) states of mind, allowing for (2) the beginnings of *samādhi* as in the distracted (*vikṣipta*) state of mind when, for a short period *sattva* gains ascendancy; the *saṃskāras* of *vikṣipta* are gradually supplanted by those of (3) one-pointedness (*ekāgratā*) and the 'truth-bearing' insight where the binding power of the rajasic and tamasic or afflicted modifications (*kliṣṭa-vṛttis*) and their *saṃskāras* is discarded so that the 'tide' or current of the *saṃskāras* of a *vyutthāna*-nature no longer waxes or wanes giving a wavering, unsteady nature to the mind. Consequently, (4) the discriminative discernment of the distinction between *puruṣa* and the finest aspect of *prakṛti*—*sattva*—can take place. All attachment even to the purely sattvic, nonafflicted (*akliṣṭa*) *vṛttis* of insight (*prajñā*) along with their *saṃskāras* dissolves when the state of *nirodha/niruddha* gains considerable strength and momentum. In *asamprajñāta*, *puruṣa* dwells by itself and this enstatic 'experience' generates a *nirodha-saṃskāra*. Moreover, as Bhoja Rāja affirms, '... the *saṃskāras* born of *nirodha* burn the *saṃskāras* born of 'one-pointedness' (*ekāgratā*) and also burn themselves' [73]. There being no stage of samsāric involvement after this, no other *saṃskāras* can replace the *nirodha-saṃskāras* that have 'burnt' or 'consumed' themselves.

The higher dispassion arising from the discernment of *puruṣa* (YS I.16) is the crucial means that prevents the mind from being overtaken by the *vyutthāna*-mode of identification; it is an advanced stage of mastery (*vaśīkāra*)—following from the lower form of dispassion (*vairāgya*) defined in YS I.15 [74]—where the yogin is no longer under the binding influence of the *avidyā*-dominated play of the *guṇas* (i.e. *saṃyoga*). Soteriologically, the *guṇas* have become 'void of purpose' (*artha-śūnya*, YB I.18). Epistemologically, the yogin is freed from the limited forms of perception and self-understanding based on *samprajñāta*-identifications. This state is also referred to as "having *saṃskāra* only as residue" (*saṃskāra-śeṣa*, see note 31). If this state is in its initial stages and is not sufficiently established in the mind, further misidentification with objects (and therefore of selfhood) can arise [75]. Eventually this subtle residue of *saṃskāras* dissolves in a last purificatory stage of the mind and the yogin permanently lives in "a state, as it were, of the absence of objects [of support] ... the seedless *samādhi* which is supra-cognitive' [76].

In the last chapter of the YS (*Kaivalya-Pāda*), the liberated state of 'aloneness' (*kaivalya*) in Yoga is said to ensue upon the attainment of *dharmamegha-samādhi*, the 'cloud of dharma' *samādhi*. This *samādhi* follows from the discriminative discernment (*vivekakhyāti*) and is the precursor to 'aloneness' [77]. The high-level discriminative vision (also called *prasaṃkhyāna* in the texts) is the fruit of *samprajñāta-samādhi* but is not itself *dharmamegha-samādhi* [78]. The yogin must be disinterested in and detached

from *vivekakhyāti* and the sovereign power and omniscience which results [79]. Having relinquished all thirst for the 'seen' and the 'heard', indeed for the *guṇas* themselves [80], the yogin discards all involvement with the saṃsāric realm of attachment and pride because of the awareness of the undesirable (sorrowful) consequences of such re-entrance [81]. The inclination towards misidentification with *vṛtti* has ceased. The yogin has abandoned any search for (or attachment to) reward or 'profit' from his or her meditational practice. A perpetual state of discerning insight follows [82] through which the yogin is always aware of the fundamental distinction between: extrinsic identity/the world of change, and intrinsic identity/pure unchanging consciousness. *YS* IV.29 states: "Indeed, following from [that elevated state of] meditative reflection, for the one who has discriminative discernment and is at all times non-acquisitive, there arises the 'cloud of *dharma*' *samādhi*" [83]. Vyāsa asserts that because the seed-*saṃskāra* of taint is destroyed, no further ideas rooted in ignorance and based on an afflicted identity of self can arise [84].

Dharmamegha-samādhi, so it appears, presupposes that the yogin has cultivated higher dispassion *(para-vairāgya)*—the means to the enstatic consciousness realised in *asamprajñāta-samādhi* [85]. Thus, *dharmamegha-samādhi* is more or less a synonym of *asamprajñāta-samādhi* and can even be understood as the consummate phase of the awakening disclosed in enstasy, the final step on the long and arduous yogic journey to authentic identity and 'aloneness' [86]. A permanent identity shift—from the perspective of the human personality to *puruṣa*—takes place. Now free from any dependence on or subordination to knowledge or *vṛtti*, and detached from the world of misidentification *(saṃyoga)*, the yogin yet retains the purified guṇic powers of virtue including illuminating 'knowledge of all' [87] (due to purified *sattva*), non-afflicted activity [88] (due to purified *rajas*), and a healthy, stable body-form (due to purified *tamas*). Fully awakened into the self-effulgent nature of *puruṣa*, the yogin witnesses, observes, perceives *prakṛti*, yet ceases to be ensnared and consumed by the drama or play of the *guṇas* whether in the form of ignorance or knowledge, cause or effect, personal identity or sense of otherness. The autotransparent knower, knowledge and action co-exist in a state of mutual attunement. One problem which easily arises in Yoga hermeneutics is when the knower and knowledge are completely sundered and the doctrine of 'aloneness' *(kaivalya)* becomes reified into a radically dualistic, orthodox perspective which paralyses the possibility of developing fresh ways to understand the relation between the knower and knowledge. Initially there must be some relation, some continuum (i.e. consciousness and its modes: reflected or pure), or liberation would not be possible because one could never make the transition from delusion to enlightenment. The point of their distinction is that one must not try to attempt to understand or grasp the transcendent knower from a relative, empirical and therefore inept perspective.

YS IV.30 declares: "From that [*dharmamegha-samādhi*] there is the cessation of afflicted action' [89]. Hence the binding influence of the *guṇas* in the form of the afflictions, past actions and misguided relationships is overcome; what remains is a "cloud of *dharma*" which includes an "eternality of knowledge" free from all impure covering (*āvaraṇa-mala*, *YS* IV.31) or veiling affliction and where "little (remains) to be known" [90]. The eternality or endlessness of knowledge is better understood metaphorically rather than literally: It is not knowledge expanded to infinity but implies *puruṣa*-realisation which transcends the limitations and particulars of knowledge (*vṛtti*).

The culmination of the Yoga system is found when, following from *dharmamegha-samādhi*, the mind and actions are freed from misidentification and affliction and one

is no longer deluded/confused with regard to one's true nature and identity (*svarūpa*). At this stage of practice the yogin is disconnected (*viyoga*) from all patterns of egoically-motivated action. Vijñāna Bhikṣu argues that while cognitive *samādhi* abolishes all the *karma* except the *prārabdha karma*—the *karma* that is already ripening in the present—the enstatic realisation in *asamprajñāta-samādhi* has the potency to destroy even the *prārabdha karma* [91] including all the previous *samskāras* [92]. The *karma* of such a yogin is said to be neither 'white' (*a'sukla*), nor 'black' (*akrsna*), nor 'mixed' [93]. There is a complete exhaustion or 'burning up' of karmic residue, i.e. the afflictions (*klesas*) in the form of latent impressions (*samskāras*). According to both Vyāsa [94] and Vijñāna Bhikṣu [95], one to whom this high state of purification takes place is designated as a *jīvanmukta*: one who is liberated while still alive (i.e. embodied). The modern commentator, H. Āraṇya, also asserts that through freedom from affliction in the form of *samskāra* the yogin attains to the status of a *jīvanmukta* [96].

It appears to be the case that both Patañjali and Vyāsa use the term *samskāra* to refer to mental impressions that are structured and function within the overall context of spiritual ignorance (*avidyā*)—a misapprehension of authentic identity, of the true nature of *puruṣa*—and within the context of liberating knowledge (*jñāna, prajñā*) that frees the yogin from ignorance and its effects (and affects). *Samskāra* means a mental impression based on some degree of ignorance of *puruṣa* and can include knowledge (*jñāna*) or insight (*prajñā*) as it continues to function within the broader epistemological framework of the 'failure-to-see' (*adarsana*), that is, the failure to identify as *puruṣa* and 'see' clearly from the perspective of *puruṣa*. *Samskāras* arise within the context of our primary analogue of empirical discourse—*cittavrtti*—wherein there lies any potential for, including any present manifestation of, mistaken identity. This is obviously the case for impressions of an 'extroverted' *vyutthāna* nature. Yet it is not so apparent for impressions generated by insight (*prajñā*) and the final state of cessation (*nirodha*). *Samskāras*, therefore, refer to one of the principle building blocks or forms of ignorance in the process of *samyoga* or misidentification *as well as referring to one of the principle removers or eliminators of ignorance and the situation of samyoga or misidentification.* *Vṛttis* [97] also perform a similar paradoxical role in Yoga. However, even though the *samskāras* of *prajñā* counteract and annul the rajasic and tamasic *samskāras* in the *vyutthāna*-mode of empirical identity, and the *nirodha-samskāras* in turn obstruct and supersede the sattvic *samskāras* of insight in cognitive *samādhi*, both of these types of *samskāras* (*prajñā* and *nirodha*) remain only until the seed-mechanism (*cittavrtti*) of the yogin's mistaken identity or 'misidentification' with *prakrti* is completely eradicated and their purpose—to bring about experience and liberation—has been fulfilled [98]. The use of the *samskāras* of *prajñā* and *nirodha* are similar to the act of using a thorn to remove another thorn and then discarding both when the job is done. The mind thus ceases to generate further *samskāras* and has become utterly pure, *samskāra*-free, transparent to all modes of misidentification. When Vyāsa tells us that the *samskāras* of the yogin have become "burned", their seeds "scorched" (*YB* IV.28), it is meant that *avidyā*—the cause of *samyoga* and all the *samskāras* that take the form of habit patterns of misconception or error (*viparyaya-vāsanās, YB* II.24)—has been burned, and not that the mind or 'consciousness-of' (the power of identification) or the functioning of mental impressions and memory in total have been destroyed [99]. The yogin's understanding and the functioning (*vṛtti*) of the mind have been transformed, not negated.

In short, only ignorance (*avidvā*) and its concomitant—misidentification (the superimposition of identity in *samyoga*)—are eliminated in Yoga. It is, in a sense (and a very

specialized sense at that), correct to say that in Yoga '*prakṛti* dissolves'; but we must be very careful to pinpoint exactly what we mean when we say this. After all, the nature of manifest *prakṛti* is to be engaged in a process of constant change and transformation involving the three *guṇas*, a process that incorporates periods of manifestation ('creation'), stabilisation (sustenance, maintenance), and dissolution of formed reality. 'Dissolution', 'a returning to the source' (i.e. of unmanifest *prakṛti*) is an intrinsic dynamic of the conditional realm of the *guṇas*. This study submits that it is *prakṛti* in her mental/psychological formation of *saṃskāras* and *vṛttis* of misidentification (mistaken identity) that dissolves in Yoga [100]. The former and habitually impure mind or selfish mentality rooted in misperception/misconception (*viparyaya*) and its *saṃskāras* (and habit patterns or *vāsanās*) is transformed into a purified mind rooted in knowledge. The psychology of limited counterproductive states of mind is transformed through direct insight into the true nature and states of *prakṛti*, thereby undoing an afflictive process (*kliṣṭa, kleśa*) of egoity built on the 'failure-to see' (*adarśana, avidyā*). Clearly Yoga philosophy, far from negating human nature, has profound ramifications for psychological improvement. The superimposed condition of *puruṣa* or state of *saṃyoga* that is the cause (*YS* II.17) of impending dissatisfaction or sorrow (*duḥkha, YS* II.16) is discontinued or discarded and there is no purpose for the further production of *saṃskāras*. This finality to the process of 'cessation' (*nirodha*) is called *nirbīja-samādhi*, meaning that the 'seed' of all ignorance has been eliminated. Thus Yoga as a spiritually emancipating process takes place within the framework of misidentification/superimposition and its annihilation. Through a series of de-identifications of self-identity with phenomenal existence involving a sustained discipline of practice coupled with a dispassionate awareness, Yoga yields greater insight into the nature of the mind, thus opening the way for clearer knowledge of *puruṣa* until there arises an unmistakable identity as *puruṣa*.

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NOTES

[1] The Sanskrit text of the *Yoga-Sūtras* of Patañjali (*ca.* 2nd–3rd century CE) (*YS*), the *Yoga-Bhāṣya* of Vyāsa (*ca.* 5th century CE) (*YB*) the *Tattva-Vaiśāradī* of Vācaspati Miśra and the *Rāja-Mārtaṇḍa* of Bhoja Rāja (*RM*) is from ĀGĀŚE, KĀŚINĀTHA ŚĀSTRI (Ed.) (1904) *The Yoga-Sūtras of Patañjali* (Poona, Ānandāśrama) Sanskrit Ser. No. 47. *YB* II.28 (p. 99): *teṣāmanuṣṭhānātpañcaparvaṇo viparyayasyāśuddhirūpasya kṣayo nā'saḥ.* I should add that the very detailed commentary attributed by some to Śaṅkara (*ca* 800 CE), the great exponent of *Advaita Vedānta*, entitled *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa*—"An exposition on the commentary [of Vyāsa] on the *Yoga-sūtras*"—(and which is more properly called *Pātañjalayogaśāstravivaraṇa*) has not been incorporated in this study. The question of the above text's genuine authorship remains unanswered for the time being. There are, as some have argued, several noteworthy reasons to question Śaṅkara's authorship of this text; on this see, for example, RUKMANI, T.S. (1992) The problem of the authorship of the *Yogasūtrabhāṣyavivaraṇa*, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 20, pp. 419–423.

[2] *YS* II.28.

[3] *YB* I.12–13.

[4] *YB* I.5.

[5] See *YS* II.41 where the expression *sattvaśuddhi* is used.

[6] *YS* III.50 and IV.34.

[7] See p. 207 of PENSA, CORRADO (1969) On the purification concept in Indian tradition, with special regard to Yoga, *East asnd West* n.s., 19, pp. 194–228.

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[8] Ibid, p. 205.

[9] As Vijñāna Bhikṣu maintains, the *śāstras* mention many expiations (*prāyaścittas*) for the eradication of demerit or evil (*pāpa*) that has begun to fructify; see *Yoga-Vārttika* of Vijñāna Bhikṣu (*YV*) I.1 and I.50 on p. 29 and p. 256 respectively. Text is taken from RUKMANI, T.S. (1981) *Yogavārttika of Vijñāna Bhikṣu, Vol. 1, Samādhipāda* (Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal).

[10] See, for example, *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (*Chānd Up*) III.16, 1.

[11] On this see *YB* IV, 10 (pp. 184–185) where Vyāsa points to various internal means in Yoga (such as meditations on friendliness, faith, and so on, culminating in knowledge and detach-ment/dispassion) as being independent of and superior to external means (such as various performed deeds leading to praise or salutations, and so on). The 'mental' means adopted in Yoga are said to be productive of the highest *dharma*; see also the *Bhagavadgītā* (*BG*)(IV, 33), which declares the superiority of the 'knowledge-sacrifice' over sacrifice of material things.

[12] *YS* I.48.

[13] *YS* I.47.

[14] *YV* I.48 (p. 245): *tasminsamāhitacittasyeti purvoktasabījayoga* ....

[15] This is also implied in the practice of *saṃyama* ('constraint'), involving concentration, medi-tation, and *samādhi* (*YS* III. 4). For an in-depth study on the different stages of cognitive *samādhi* see WHICHER, I. (1996) Cognitive Samādhi in the Yoga-Sūtras, *Adyar Library Bulletin*, 60 (Diamond Jubilee Volume): 1–25.

[16] *YS* III.49.

[17] *YS* I.50 (p. 53): *tajjaḥ saṃskāro'nyasaṃskārapratibandhī*.

[18] I.50 (pp. 53–54): *samādhiprajñāpratilambhe yoginaḥ prajñākṛtaḥ saṃskāro navo navo jāyate ... samādhiprajñāprabhavaḥ saṃskāro vyutthānasaṃskārāsayaṃ bādhate. vyut-thānasaṃskārabhibhavāttatprabhavāḥ pratyayā na bhavanti. pratyayanirodhe samādhirūpatiṣṭhate. tataḥ samādhijā prajñā, tataḥ prajñākṛtāḥ saṃskārā iti navo navaḥ saṃskārāśayo jāyate. tataś ca prajñā tataś ca saṃskārā iti. kathamasau saṃskārātiśayaś cittaṃ sādhikāraṃ na kariṣyatīti. na te prajñākṛtāḥ saṃskārāḥ kleśakṣayahetutvāccittamadhikāraviśiṣṭaṃ kurvanti. cittaṃ hi te svakāryādavasādayanti. khyātiparyavasānaṃ hi cittaceṣṭitam iti.*

[19] *YB* I.5. For an examination of the concepts of *citta* and *vṛtti* see WHICHER, I. (1997) The Mind (Citta): its nature, structure and functioning in classical Yoga, (1) *Saṃbhāṣā* (Nagoya Studies in Indian Culture and Buddhism) 18, pp. 35–62 and Part (2) WHICHER, I. (1998) *Saṃbhāṣā*, 19, pp. 1–50.

[20] *YB* I.12.

[21] *YB* IV.25 (p. 200): *tatrā"tmabhāvabhāvanā ko'hamāsaṃ kathamahamāsaṃ kiṃsvididaṃ kathaṃsvididaṃ ke bhaviṣyāmaḥ kathaṃ vā bhaviṣyāma iti.*

[22] *YS* IV. 25 (p. 200): *viśeṣadarśina ātmabhāvabhāvanānivṛttiḥ.*

[23] *YS* IV.26 (p. 201): *tadā vivekanimnaṃ kaivalyaprāgbhāraṃ cittam.*

[24] *Rāja Mārtaṇḍa* of Bhoja Rāja (*ca* 11th cenury CE) (*RM*), I.50 (p. 15): ... *tattvarūpatayā'nayā janitāḥ saṃskārā balavattvādatattvarūpaprajñājanitān saṃskārānbādhituṃ* ....

[25] *YV* I.50 (p. 254): *adṛḍhaiśca prāthamikaiḥ saṃprajñātasaṃskāraistasya bādhārthāntanutāparaṃ paraiva kriyate.*

[26] See note 25 above. *YS* II.2 refers to the attenuation (*tanū-karaṇa*) of affliction brought about by *kriyā-yoga*.

[27] *YS* II.18.

[28] *YS* I.V.24.

[29] *YS* II.18.

[30] *YB* III.35.

[31] *YS* I.18 (p. 21): *virāmapratyayābhyāsapūrvaḥ saṃskāraśeṣo'nyaḥ.*

[32] *YB* I.18; see note 40 below.

[33] *Tattva-Vaiśāradī* of Vācaspati Miśra (*ca* 9th century CE (*TV*), I.18 (p. 21): *virāmo vṛttīnām abhāvas tasya pratyayaḥ kāraṇam* ....

[34] *YV* I.18 (p. 112): *vṛttyā'pi viramyatāmiti pratyayo virāmapratyayaḥ, paraṃ vairāgyaṃ jñāne'pyalambuddhirjñanamapi śamyatvity evaṃ rūpā* ....

[35] ĀRAṆYA, SWĀMI HARIHARĀNANDA *(1963) Yoga Philosophy of Patañjali*, Trans. P. N. MUKERJI (Calcutta, Calcutta University Press) writes on p. 52: "The meaning of attaining such cessation is the practice, i.e. constant repetition in the mind of the idea of supreme detachment".

[36] *RM* I.18 (p. 6): *viramyate'neneti virāmo vitarkādicintātyāgaḥ.*

[37] *YV* I.18 (p. 112): *tasyā abhyāsāt paunah punyājjāyata ityādyaviśeṣanārthah*. *TV* I.18 (p. 21): *tasyābhyāsastadanuṣṭhānaṃ paunahpunyaṃ tadeva pūrvaṃ yasya sa tathoktah*.

[38] *RM* I.18 (pp. 6–7): ... *viramapratyayas tasyābhyāsah paunahpunyena cetasi niveśanam*.

[39] Āraṇya (1963), p. 52.

[40] *YB* I.18 (pp. 21–22): *sarvavṛttipratyastamaye saṃskāraśeṣo nirodhaścittasya samādhirasaṃprajñātah. tasya paraṃ vairāgyamupāyah sālambano hyabhyāsastatsādhanāya na kalpata iti virāmapratyayo nirvastuka ālambanī kriyate*.

[41] See, for example, WOODS, JAMES HAUGHTON, Trans. (1914) *The Yoga System of Patañjali*, Harvard Oriental Studies, Vol. 17 (Cambridge, Harvard University Press), p. 12, and JHA, G., Trans. (1907) *The Yoga-Darśana* (Bombay, Rajaram Tukaram Tatya), p. 20, where "asaṃprajñāta" has been described as "unconscious". See WHICHER, I. (1996) See WHICHER, op. cit., note 15, which offers a critique of C Jung's position on *samādhi*.

[42] DASGUPTA, SURENDRANATH (1924) *Yoga as Philosophy and Religion* (London, Trubner), p. 124.

[43] KOELMAN, GASPAR M. (1970) *Pātañjala Yoga: from related ego to absolute self* (Poona, Papal Anthenaeum), p. 239.

[44] Ibid, p. 131.

[45] As I argued in WHICHER, I. (1997) Nirodha, yoga praxis and the transformation of the mind, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 25, pp. 1–67 and WHICHER, I. (1998) Yoga and freedom: a reconsideration of Patañjali's classical yoga, *Philosophy East and West*, 48(2), pp. 272–322.

[46] *YS* I.51 (p. 54): *tasyāpi nirodhe sarvanirodhānnirbījah samādhih*.

[47] *YB* I.51 (pp. 55–56): *sa na kevalaṃ samādhiprajñāvirodhī prajñākṛtānāmapi saṃskārāṇāṃ pratibandhī bhavati. kasmāt, nirodhajah saṃskārah samādhijānsaṃskārānbādhata iti. nirodhasthitikālakramānubhavena nirodhacittakṛtasaṃskārāstitavmanumeyam. vyutthānanirodhasamādhiprabhavaih saha kaivalyabhāgīyaih saṃskāraiścittaṃ svasyāṃ prakṛtāvavasthiyāyāṃ pravilīyate. tasmātte saṃskārāścittasyādhikāravirodhino na sthitihetavo bhavantīti. yasmādavasitādhikāraṃ saha kaivalyabhāgīyaih saṃskāraś cittaṃ nivartate, tasminnivṛtte puruṣah svarūpamātrapratiṣṭho'tah 'suddhah kevalo mukta ityucyata iti*.

[48] *YS* III.8.

[49] *YB* I.51; see note 47 above for text.

[50] As stated in *YS* I.14.

[51] *YS* III.10.

[52] *YB* III.10 (p. 123): *[nirodha] ... saṃskāramāndye vyutthānadharmiṇā saṃskāreṇa nirodhadharmasaṃskāro' bhibhūyata iti*.

[53] As Vijñāna Bhikṣu suggests (*YV* I.51, p. 259).

[54] Pensa op. cit., note 7, p. 208 states: "... *asaṃprajñāta-samādhi* figures as an accelerator of the yogic way, not as an essential instrument".

[55] For an analysis of various methods of Yoga practice in the *Yoga-Sūtras* including the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* see WHICHER (1997), op. cit., note 45.

[56] See note 40 above.

[57] *YS* III.50; see also *YB* III.50 and I.2.

[58] *YS* III.49. Patañjali goes on to state in *YS* III.51 (p. 168): *sthānyupanimantraṇe saṅgasmayākaraṇaṃ punaraniṣṭaprasaṅgāt*. "Upon the invitation of those well established, there is no cause for attachment and pride because of the renewed association with the undesired [realms]". The meaning of this *sūtra* is similar to the meaning of dispassion (*vairāgya*) in *YS* I.15. The comments made by CHAPPLE and KELLY (see CHAPPLE, CHRISTOPHER K. and YOGI ANADA VIRAJ (EUGENE P. KELLY, JR.) (1990) *The Yoga-Sūtras of Patañjali: an analysis of the Sanskrit with accompanying English translation* (Delhi, Sri Satguru), p. 104), are worth noting. They write: 'Even if one is tempted to re-enter the realm of attachment, the momentum to do so has ceased, because one is constantly aware of the undesirable outcome of such a return". Of course, the "undesirable outcome" refers to sorrow or dissatisfaction (*duhkha*).

[59] *YB* I.16.

[60] *YS* II.27.

[61] *YB* III.35 (p. 155): *tasmācca sattvātpariṇāmino'tyantavidharmā viśuddho'nyaścitimātrarūpah puruṣah ... yastu tasmādviśiṣṭaścitimātrarūpo'nyah pauruṣeyah pratyayastatra saṃyamāt puruṣaviṣayā prajñā jāyate*.

[62] See *Yogasāra-Saṅgraha* of Vijñāna Bhikṣu (*YSS*). Text is taken from JHA, G. (1894) *An English Translation with Sanskrit Text of the* Yogasāra-Saṅgraha *of Vijñāna Bhikṣu* (Bombay, Tattra-Vivechaka Press). *YSS* (p. 55): *tam imaṃ saṃyamaṃ vihāyātmāsākṣātkārasyanya upāyo nāsti*.

[63] *YB* III.35; see also text of *YB* II.27.

[64] *YB* II.24; see also *YS* IV.24.

[65] See note 47 above and related text.

[66] *ĀRAŅYA*, op. cit., note 35, p. 123, writes: "It might be argued that as stoppage of cognition is not a form of knowledge, how can there be latent impressions thereof ..." and "... *nirodha* is nothing but broken fluctuation, and the latent impression is of that break of fluctuation. Complete renunciation can give rise to latent impressions, which only bring stoppage of mutation and thus stop the mind from fluctuating. There is going on incessantly a break between the appearance and the disappearance of modifications of the mind, which break is only lengthened in concentration on *nirodha samādhi*".

[67] *RM* I.51 (p. 16): *tasyāpi samprajñātasya nirodhe pravilaye sati sarvāsāṃ cittavṛttīnāṃ svakāraṇe pravilayādyā yā saṃskāramātrād vṛttirūdeti tasyāstasyā neti netīti kevalaṃ paryudasanānnirbījaḥ samādhirāvirbhavati.*

[68] See, for example *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad (BĀ Up)* II.3, 6; III.9, 26; IV.2, 4; IV.4, 22; IV.5, 15.

[69] See *YSS* (p. 4) where Vijñāna Bhikṣu states: *nirodho na nāśo'bhāvasāmānyaṃ vā.*

[70] See especially the argument presented on the meaning of Patañjali's definition of Yoga (*cittavṛttinirodha*) in WHICHER (1997), op. cit., note 45.

[71] *YSS* (p. 4): ... *vṛtty eva nirodhenāpi saṃskāro janyate.*

[72] *YS* IV.34

[73] *RM* I.18 (p. 7): *evamekāgratājanitānsaṃskārānnirodhajāḥ svātmānaṃ ca nirdahanti.* For a study of the states of mind in Yoga see WHICHER (1997) op. cit., note 45.

[74] Patañjali states in *YS* I.15 (p. 18): *dṛṣṭānuśravikaviṣayavitṛṣṇasya vaśīkārasaṃjñā vairāgyam.* "Dispassion is the knowledge of mastery in one who does not thirst for any object either seen [i.e. of an earthly nature] or heard of [i.e. of the subtle worlds]".

[75] See Vyāsa's commentary on *YS* III.10 in note 52 above.

[76] *YB* I.18 (p. 22): *tadabhyāsapūrvakaṃ hi cittaṃ nirālambanamabhāvaprāptamiva bhavatītyeṣa nirbījaḥ samādhirasamprajñātaḥ.*

[77] See FEUERSTEIN, GEORG (1980) *The Philosophy of Classical Yoga* (Manchester, Manchester University Press), pp. 98–101, and KLOSTERMAIER, K.K. (1986) Dharmamegha Samādhi: comments on Yogasūtra IV.29, *Philosophy East and West*, 36(3), pp. 253–262.

[78] This has been clearly articulated by FEUERSTEIN ibid. and is evident from statements in Vyāsa's commentary; see *YB* I.2, 15 as well as II.2 and IV.29.

[79] *YS* III. 49–50.

[80] *YS* I.15–16 and III.50.

[81] *YS* III.51.

[82] *YB* IV.29 (p. 202): *yadā'yaṃ brāhmaṇaḥ prasaṃkhyāne'pyakusīdastato'pi na kiṃcitprārthayate. tatrāpi viraktasya sarvathā vivekakhyātireva bhavati ....*

[83] *YS* IV.29 (p. 202): *prasaṃkhyāne'pyakusīdasya sarvathā vivekakhyāter dharmameghaḥ samādhiḥ.* It is noteworthy that Vyāsa *(YB* II.15) likens Yoga (p. 78) to medicine with its four parts: illness, the cause of illness, the state of good health, and the remedy. Thus Yoga is portrayed as a 'fourfold division' whose four parts (*caturvyūha*) are: (1) *saṃsāra*, which (along with its sorrowful states) is to be discarded; (2) the conjunction (*saṃyoga*) between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti/pradhāna*, which is the cause of what is to be discarded; (3) liberation, which is the complete cessation of the conjunction; and (4) right knowledge, which is the means to liberation. Vyāsa *(YB* II.15, p. 78) declares that the true nature/identity (*svarūpa*) of the one who is liberated is not something to be obtained or discarded: *tatra hātuḥ svarūpamupādevaṃ vā heyaṃ vā na bhavitamarhati.* The inalienable identity of *puruṣa* puts it in a 'category' that transcends the dualistic categories of means and ends, causes and effects, obtaining and discarding. In a stimulating and incisive essay on this topic, HALBFASS, WILHELM (1991) *Tradition and Reflection: explorations in Indian thought* (Albany, State University of New York Press), pp. 243–263, points out the limitations of the applicability to Yoga of the medical/therapeutic paradigm. In particular he writes (p. 253): "The denial of *hāna* ['discarding'] and *upādāna* ['obtaining'] with regard to the ultimate goal of Yoga is a denial of the fundamental premises of the medical, therapeutic orientation; in a sense it revokes the 'fourfold scheme' and the therapeutic paradigm itself. Indeed, it is not only through the adoption of this paradigm, but also through its transcendence, that Yoga and other schools of Indian thought articulate their self-understanding". Of course the fundamental 'disease' that Yoga seeks to overcome is *avidyā* and its manifestation as *saṃyoga*.

[84] *YB* IV.29 (p. 202): *saṃskārabījakṣayānnāsya pratyayāntarāṇyutpadyante.*

[85] *YB*, I.18.

[86] See Feuerstein, op. cit., note 77, p. 98.

[87] *YS* III.49 and III.54.

[88] *YS* IV.7; see also *YS* IV.30 (note 89 below).

[89] *YS* IV.30 (p. 202): *tatah klesakarmanivṛttih*. Thus, it may be said that to dwell without defilement in a 'cloud of *dharma*' is the culminating description by Patañjali of what tradition later referred to as living liberation (*jīvanmukti*). To be sure, there is a 'brevity of description' in the *YS* regarding the state of liberation. Only sparingly, with reservation (one might add, caution) and mostly in metaphorical terms does Patañjali speak about the qualities exhibited by the liberated yogin. CHAPPLE, CHRISTOPHER K. (1996) "Living liberation in Sāṃkhya and Yoga", in: ANDREW O. FORT and PATRICIA Y. MUMME (Eds) *Living Liberation in Hindu Thought* (Albany, State University of New York Press), p. 116, see below, provides three possible reasons for this 'brevity of description' regarding living liberation in the context of the *YS* [and *Sāṃkhya*, i.e. the *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā* (*SK*) of Īśvara Kṛṣṇa (ca. 4th century CE)]: (1) He states: "(T)he genre in which both texts were written does not allow for the sort of narrative and poetic embellishment found in the epics and Purāṇas". (2) Perhaps, as Chapple suggests "... a deliberate attempt has been made to guarantee that the recognition of a liberated being remains in the hands of a spiritual preceptor". What is to be noted here is that the oral and highly personalised lineage tradition within Yoga stresses the authority of the *guru* which guards against false claims to spiritual attainment on the part of others and thereby "helps to ensure the authenticity and integrity of the tradition". (3) A further reason for brevity "could hinge on the logical contradiction that arises due to the fact that the notion of self is so closely identified with *ahaṃkāra* [the ego or prakṛtic sense of self]. It would be an oxymoron for a person to say [']I am liberated.[']" The Self (*puruṣa*) is of course not an object which can be seen by itself thus laying emphasis, as Chapple points out, on the ineffable nature of the liberative state that transcends mind-content, all marks and activity itself.

[90] *YS* IV.31 (p. 203): *tadā sarvāvaraṇamalāpetasya jñānasyā"nantyājjñeyamalpam*.

[91] See *YV* I.1; *YSS* (p. 2) states: *asaṃprajñātayogasya cākhilavṛttisaṃskāradāhadvārā prārabdhasyāpy atikrameṇeti*.

[92] See *YSS* (pp. 8 and 3).

[93] *YS* IV.7 and *YB* IV.7.

[94] See *YB* IV.30 (pp. 202–203): *klesakarmanivṛttau jīvann eva vidvan vimukto bhavati. kasmāt, yasmād viparyayo bhavasya kāraṇam. na hi kṣīṇaviparyayah kaścit kenacit kvacijjāto dṛśyata iti*. "On cessation of affliction and *karma*, the knower is released while yet living. Why? Because erroneous cognition (*viparyaya*) is the cause of rebirth [of egoity]. When error has vanished, no one is ever seen to be born anywhere". Here there is room for an epistemological understanding of 'reborn', i.e. one who is said to be reborn is misidentified as a body-self which takes birth and will eventually perish. The liberated yogin may have a body which is subject to birth and death yet the yogin is no longer misidentified as the body or as any other aspect of changing existence.

[95] See RUKMANI, T. S. (1989) *Yogavārttika of Vijñāna Bhikṣu*, Vol. IV, Kaivalyapāda (Delhi, Munshiram Manoharlal). *YV* IV.30 (pp. 123–124). Elsewhere in his *YSS* (p. 17) Vijñāna Bhikṣu tells us that the yogin who is "established in the state of *dharmamegha-samādhi* is called a *jīvanmukta*" ... *dharmameghah samādhih ... asyāmavasthāyāṃ jīvanmukta ityucyate*. Vijñāna Bhikṣu is critical of Vedāntins (i.e. Śaṅkara's *Advaita Vedānta* school) which, he says, associate the *jīvanmukta* with ignorance ('*avidyā-kleśa*')—probably because of the liberated being's continued link with the body—despite Yoga's insistence on the complete overcoming of the afflictions.

[96] See Āraṇya, op. cit., note 66, p. 433; also p. 226.

[97] See WHICHER, I. (1997, 1998), op. cit., note 19, for a detailed study of the term *vṛtti*.

[98] *YS* II.18, 21 and 22.

[99] See, for example, KOELMAN. op. cit., note 43, p. 249 and FEUERSTEIN, GEORG (1979) *The Yoga Sūtra of Patañjali: a new translation and commentary* (Folkestone, UK, Wm. Dawson), pp. 58, 142 and 144, who both imply that the psychophysical being of the yogin becomes incapacitated, or is disintegrated or negated in the liberated state.

[100] For a discussion on some of the implications for an embodied freedom (*jīvanmukti*) in Patañjali's Yoga see WHICHER, I. (1998), op. cit., note 45.

Royal spirits, Chinese gods, and magic monks: Thailand's boom-time religions of prosperity[1]

Peter A. Jackson

During the economic boom of the 1980s and 1990s, Thailand saw the emergence of a diverse range of 'prosperity religions', popular movements that emphasize the acquisition of wealth as much as salvation. This paper considers three Thai prosperity religions – the worship of the spirit of King Chulalongkorn, and more generally the Thai monarchy; devotion to the Mahayana Buddhist *bodhisattva* Kuan Im; and movements surrounding auspiciously named Theravada Buddhist monks, both living and dead, reputed to possess supernatural powers. After a consideration of recent approaches to the study of Thai religion, the paper describes the form and separate histories of these movements, and then examines the ways in which they began to merge symbolically at the height of the economic boom. The paper concludes with a consideration of the critiques of the prosperity movements from Thai Buddhist doctrinalists, critiques which were fairly faint during the boom itself but which have grown in intensity since the onset of the economic crisis in 1997.

Until the onset of the financial crisis in July 1997, Thailand experienced a decade-long economic boom, with average annual growth rates approaching ten per cent. Between 1984 and 1994 Thailand recorded the world's highest average annual rate of economic growth (Unger, 1998:1), a situation which saw an explosion of wealth and commercial opportunities unprecedented in the country's history. For increasing numbers of people, the 1990s saw the question of how best to spend and invest one's money supersede the historically dominant question of how to make any living at all. This extended boom created a euphoric mood of national confidence that influenced all aspects of social, cultural, and

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religious life. Jean Comaroff has noted the relationship between economic and symbolic productivity during the boom years, describing Thailand as a society 'where the dynamism of capitalist production is rivalled only by the drive of diverse forms of ritual creativity, both within and outside Buddhism' (Comaroff, 1994:301). One of the most prominent aspects of this cultural creativity was the emergence of a diverse range of what Roberts (1995:2) has called 'prosperity religions', popular movements that emphasize wealth acquisition as much as salvation. Thailand's boom time prosperity religions linked an array of spiritually significant symbols with improving luck in making money, and attached spiritual meanings to the prevailing consumerism of the period. Wealth constituted the basis, the practice, and the objective of these movements. While they rose rapidly to prominence within the emergent consumerist culture, the prosperity religions accentuated long-established patterns of symbolic syncretism and luck-enhancing protective ritualism, incorporating elements from both the Thai and Chinese traditions.

The Thai prosperity religions are important not only because they were some of the most popular forms of devotional expression during the boom years but also because their commodification of Buddhism has been stridently critiqued by some monks, lay intellectuals, and politicians, most notably members of the Democrat Party led by current Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai. At the end of the twentieth century, marketized forms of religious expression – derogatorily called *phuttha phanit* ('commercialized Buddhism' or 'commerce in Buddhism') by its critics – has become the most contentious religious issue in Thailand.[2]

Three Thai prosperity religions are considered here: (1) the worship of the spirit of King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) and more generally the Thai monarchy; (2) devotion to the Chinese Mahayana Buddhist *bodhisattva* Kuan Im (Guan Yin); and (3) movements surrounding auspiciously named Theravada Buddhist monks, both living and dead, reputed to possess supernatural powers. These three movements by no means exhaust the phenomenon of commercially oriented religiosity. The recently re-problematized Wat Phra Dhammakaya movement based at Pathumthani just north of Bangkok is another prominent form of

[2]   Several papers presented at the seventh International Conference of Thai Studies (4–8 July 1999, University of Amsterdam) dealt with controversies surrounding commercialized religiosity. For example: Daniel Arghiros, 'The temple, money, and the polling station: rural monks and Thai electoral politics'; Rungrawee Chalermsripinyorat, 'Doing the business of faith: the Dhammakaya Movement and the spiritually thirsty Thai middle class'.

'commercialized Buddhism'.[3] Large numbers of monasteries around the country also embarked on massive temple construction programmes and merit making-cum-fund raising schemes during the boom years, and have also been criticized as a form of *phuttha phanit*.[4]

The devotional movements of King Chulalongkorn, Kuan Im, and 'magic monks' (*phra saksit*) such as Luang Phor Khoon are the focus of this study because as the Thai boom reached its climax in 1996 and the first half of 1997 these three prosperity religions began to merge into a loose symbolic complex. Each of these royal, Chinese, and Theravada prosperity movements has its own history, and emerged in the 1980s and early 1990s as a distinctive focus of ritual and devotion. Each figure associated with these separate movements is the object of a devotional cult, often geographically focused in various shrines, public statues, Buddhist monasteries, and other sites of pilgrimage. However, an increasing symbolic integration of these Thai prosperity religions became evident in the mid-1990s. A summary of each movement is provided below. However, the primary concern of this study is not the individual histories of these movements, their different ritual practices, or the pilgrimage sites associated with them. Rather, I concentrate on their intersection. I argue that their symbolic convergence in the mid-1990s assumed political as well as religious significance, as it came to be supported by the monarchy, populist politicians, Sino-Thai business groups, and sections of the civilian and military bureaucracies, as well as large numbers of ordinary Thai men and women.

In his studies of the Rama V and Kuan Im prosperity religions, Thai

[3] Wat Phra Dhammakaya was at the centre of a controversy over improper proselytizing methods and possible military connections in the late 1980s (see Jackson, 1989; Zehner, 1990; and Apinya, 1993). The recent controversy surrounding Wat Phra Dhammakaya is based on claims of commercial fraud, excessive wealth acquisition, and unorthodox teachings. Focused on the issue of whether the monastery's abbot, Phra Dhammachayo, should be defrocked, the controversy has generated such interest that in early 1999 the *Bangkok Post* Internet edition created a special website (see www.bangkokpost.net/issues/temple/) linking all the newspaper's reports on the matter.

[4] See, for example, *Bangkok Post*, 20 August 1998, 'The bigger the better', by Suthon Sukphisit, Outlook Section, p. 2. In this article on the boom in temple construction, Suthon writes, '[A]s you survey the structures currently being built at some of our Buddhist temples, you will notice that some of them betray a tendency toward the excessive and the grandiose. From an economic point of view they are wasteful of the money lavished on them. And . . . any Buddhist whose view has not been clouded by materialism will know that they fail to reflect the essence of Buddhist teaching. . . . No matter whether the phenomenon of lavish construction of projects undertaken by Buddhist temples is viewed through the eyes of an architect, an economist, or a good Buddhist, it reveals itself [to be] a practice that should be discontinued.'

historian Nithi Aeusrivongse (1993; 1994) uses the expression *latthi-phithi* ('doctrine-ritual'), which he glosses in English as 'cult', to describe these ritual-symbolic devotional movements. Nithi defines *latthi-phithi* as 'a ritually rich religious doctrine which is not a part of the "principles" [*lak-kan*] or orthodoxy of the dominant religion adhered to by the majority of people' (Nithi, 1993:11n.). However, while the movements considered here may have begun as unorthodox minority phenomena, their rapid growth in the 1990s meant that their popularity and influence relocated them from marginal positions into the cultural and religious mainstream. I prefer to call these phenomena 'movements' or 'religions' rather than 'cults' to denote their significance at the height of the boom.

Significantly, two key constituents of the symbolic complex, the movements centred on King Rama V and Kuan Im, did not emerge from Theravada Buddhism, Thailand's semi-official national religion. Indeed, all the prosperity religions existed outside the control of the Buddhist *sangha* hierarchy, although during the boom years many Buddhist monks and monasteries participated as an arm of the popular wealth-oriented movements. In 1994 Nithi Aeusrivongse predicted that, despite their non-Buddhist origins, the Rama V and Kuan Im movements would ultimately be incorporated within 'official' (*thang-kan*), that is, state-sponsored Thai religion (Nithi, 1994:79). Nithi's prediction had, in fact, come to pass by the time of the onset of the economic crash in July 1997, for in the second half of the 1990s the prosperity religions were much more widely practised than in the first half of the decade.

Numerous authors have described the social dislocation (Pasuk and Baker, 1995; 1998), environmental degradation (Hirsch, 1996; Rigg, 1995), political corruption (Pasuk and Sungsidh, 1994), and cultural and religious commercialization (Jackson, 1997) caused by the boom decade. But, what has often been overlooked is that, in the midst of these disorienting transformations, the outlines of a new social and cultural formation began to become visible in urban Thailand. I argue the commodification of religion that accompanied the boom years was not a symptom of cultural collapse, as many doctrinalist Buddhist critics in Thailand have contended, but rather became the productive core of a new, highly popular expression of religio-cultural symbolism and ritual.

Scope of this study

In this study I trace the cultural and political significance of the symbolic complex of Thai prosperity religions, by examining their expressions

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in public spaces and their representations in popular and academic discourses. This is not a sociological account of the followers of the individual movements or an ethnography of the local meanings that different actors attach to them, although these issues are touched upon. My primary concerns are the conditions that supported the rise to prominence of the prosperity religions, their relations to the changing character of the Thai social and economic formation, and their associations with political power. My main sources are the Thai press, devotional literature, and ritual products associated with the movements, such as amulets and memorabilia. Data from these sources are supplemented with observations gathered from several months spent in Bangkok and the north-east of Thailand on four occasions from 1995 to 1998. However, these observations are more anecdotal than systematic. My visits to localities such as the Rama V monument in central Bangkok, amulet markets, religious and gift sections of metropolitan and provincial department stores, and monasteries associated with the movements were limited to attempts to gain impressions of the public visibility of the images and ritual objects related to these movements, as well as the extent of participation in the rituals associated with them.

The Thai are fond of periodizing their history into 'eras' or *yuk* (from Pali, *yuga*). The scope of this paper is limited to the period of Thailand's recent history commonly labelled the *yuk boom* or the *yuk lokaphiwat*, 'the globalization era' (see Reynolds, 1998). There are many other popular labels for this period. In August 1998, a Bangkok taxi driver, with whom I chatted about religion and the economic collapse as we edged through the morning traffic, referred to the boom years as *yuk Luang Phor Khoon boom*, that is, the era when Luang Phor Khoon, the most prominent Buddhist monk associated with the prosperity religions, 'boomed', or was extremely popular. Here, the resignified meaning of the borrowed word 'boom' conflates rapid growth with mass popularity, reflecting the intersection of economics and popular sentiment that constituted the cultural matrix within which the prosperity religions flourished. The taxi driver's expression shows how the idiom of economics inflected many aspects of cultural production, including religiosity, during the boom period. However, that brief golden age is now over, and since July 1997 it has been relabelled retrospectively the *yuk setthakit forngnam*, 'the bubble economy era'. Thailand has now entered the *yuk kha-ngern baht loi-tua*, 'the era of the floating baht', often succinctly called the *yuk IMF* or even *kali yuk* (Pali, *kali yuga*), Thailand's 'dark age'.

This is predominantly a study of urban religion. Although I have observed devotional objects related to the movements in monasteries and shrines in small towns across north-east Thailand, I do not know the extent to which the complex of prosperity religions became a popular form of devotional expression in villages during the boom, or whether regional variations existed in its popularity. Many of the sites of spiritual power and pilgrimage associated with the movements are located in the countryside. However, as Tambiah (1984) has noted in his study of supernatural Buddhism, the devotees of many rural-based religious centres are often urban-dwellers who make pilgrimage-cum-holiday trips (Thai, *thiaw*) to visit these locations.

I begin with a review of how Thai religion has been studied in recent decades, and outline my interest in taking Thai religious studies beyond anthropology and history into an understanding of Thai political economy. I then consider precedents for the recent movements, as well as parallels in other parts of Asia. Following these remarks, I briefly describe the form and separate histories of the wealth-focused Rama V, Kuan Im, and 'magic monk' religious movements. I subsequently consider the ways in which these three sets of movements began to merge symbolically at the height of the boom. I conclude with an account of the critiques of the prosperity movements which existed as a constant, but usually faint, form of 'background noise' during the boom but whose volume has intensified many times since the onset of the economic crisis.

Approaches to studying religious populism and marketized spirituality

Two main streams of research have dominated English-language scholarship on Thai religion in recent decades. Many anthropological studies have been village-centred and emphasized the syncretic character of everyday religious practice in rural settings. These locally based studies (for example Terwiel, 1979; Tambiah, 1984; Mulder, 1990; Turton, 1991) have analysed the relations between monks' ritual practice and the accumulation of supernatural power (*saksit*). These studies have been important in highlighting the complexity of Thai religious expression (see especially Kirsch, 1977) and correcting earlier Indological and Buddhological text-based approaches which often saw complexity only as a contradiction between 'true' doctrine and 'deviationist' popular practices. Other anthropological studies have considered one particular

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religious movement (for example Zehner, 1990; Taylor, 1993[a], 1993[b]) or a set of related movements (for example Kamala, 1997).

In contrast, most historical studies have been urban-centred and focused on the relations between the state and the charismatic authority (*barami*) of institutional Buddhism. These studies have either considered the appropriation by the state of Buddhism's legitimatory symbolism (for example Tambiah, 1976; Ishii, 1986; Jackson, 1989; Somboon, 1982, 1993) or oppositional uses of Buddhist ritual and symbology to resist state power (for example Keyes, 1977; Jackson, 1988[b]; Taylor, 1993[a], 1993[b]) or to reformulate the state from within (McCargo, 1993, 1997). However, neither the anthropological nor the historical approach alone is adequate to explain the form and character of the 1990s prosperity movements. In part, this is because previous studies have not considered the broad phenomenon of successive waves of religious populism in Thailand, nor have they dealt with the issue of how to conceive of forms of religious expression that merge with consumerism and market-based symbolisms.

Devotional movements and waves of religious populism

Thai popular religiosity is a highly plastic phenomenon that exists in finely tuned dynamic relations with the society of which it is part. This dynamism and plasticity emerge, firstly, from its highly syncretic and multiform character and, secondly, from its devotional focus on spiritually powerful or *saksit* personalities. *Saksit* personalities, who may become objects of devotional worship, include living figures such as monks and spirit mediums, as well as supernatural beings such as spirits and deities deriving from diverse animist, Brahmanical, Buddhist, and Chinese traditions.

The notion of devotional religiosity is not prominent in the literature on Thai spirituality, and is perhaps more likely to be thought of as characterizing the followers of Hindu *bhakti* movements or Roman Catholic saint cults than Thailand's ostensibly Buddhist populace. However, when one looks past the touristic public image (*phap-phot*) of Thai religion – a state-sponsored national bureaucracy of world-renouncing clerics dedicated to teaching a doctrine of salvation through the dissolution of self-hood – then a very different picture emerges. In popular religiosity – whether practised within an animist, Brahmanical, or even a Buddhist symbolic frame – neither the clerical bureaucracy of the Buddhist *sangha* nor notions of non-self (*anatta*) or transcendent salvation (*nibbana*) play a significant role. In Thai popular religion it is the 'self' of a spiritually powerful

personality that is of paramount importance, and spiritual practice centres on establishing a strong personal relationship between the devotee and that personality. This is the case whether the spiritual personality is a Buddhist monk, a Hindu god, a former king of Siam, a Chinese deity, or a locality spirit believed to inhabit an old tree, a cave, a mountain top, or other natural feature. The study of popular Thai religion needs to abandon a concern with the doctrines and organizational forms of Buddhism and adopt a broader frame of reference in which the similarities of all forms of personality-based devotionalism are made the focus of study. Most importantly, a post-Buddhist frame is needed in order to understand many of the dominant religious movements of the 1990s.

Of the multitude of personality-based devotional movements that can be found in Thailand at any one historical moment, a few tend to become much more prominent in terms of the number of their followers and the extent to which they are represented in the press and media. Perhaps the most interesting feature of contemporary Thai religiosity is not the details of momentarily popular movements but rather the fact that new forms of mass religiosity focused on a changing array of *saksit* personalities are produced so persistently and so regularly. Behind the details of the waxing and waning of individual movements one can detect a more constant wavelike phenomenon that raises certain devotional movements above the crowd for an often brief historical moment, only to disappear into relative obscurity beneath the surge of the next advancing wave of religious populism.

It is often the case that both anthropologists and historians have studied the more popular Thai religious movements. Indeed, the level of popularity or notoriety of different movements often influences which ones are noticed by researchers, and hence become objects of study. Religious movements that happen to make front page news are more likely to be written about than those which are followed in quiet obscurity, with the study of Thai religion tending to follow in the wake of trends in religious populism. The underlying phenomenon of waves of religious movements that successively attain mass popularity, only to fall into obscurity after a relatively brief period, has not been considered. The movements that happen to ride the crest of the current wave of popularity tend to get studied, not the waves and troughs of religious populism itself. Neither the ethnography nor the historiography of religion in Thailand has reflected critically on its own history, to ask why certain religious phenomena and not others have become part of the academic literature.

This study begins to map the wavelike forms of Thai popular religiosity, the changes that nevertheless appear to manifest certain dynamic constants. I am seeking to understand the production of religious populism by exploring the relations between religion and other aspects of society. A religious studies approach which emphasizes the internal coherence of rituals or the meanings of doctrine and practice cannot tell us why one movement and not another, apparently similar one, becomes a national phenomenon or a focus of state intervention. To understand the production of religious 'stars' in the firmament of Thai popular culture we need to focus less on the internality of religion and more on the form and density of relations between religious symbology, ritual, and doctrine, on the one hand, and political, economic, and social life, on the other. To understand the often rapid rise and equally rapid fall in the popularity of devotional movements we need to appreciate how religious meanings intersect with meanings and aspirations in politics, the economy, the media, and other areas of social and cultural life.

In broad terms, the phenomenon of repeating waves of religious populism appears to emerge from the intersection of: (1) Thai religiosity's complex heritage; (2) its devotional focus on powerful personalities; and (3) the impact of the mass media. The personality-focused character of Thai popular religion means that, unlike the centrally organized Buddhist *sangha*, it does not exist as a single church or institution but rather as a multitude of often local devotional movements. This mass of local movements, which is continually being added to as new *saksit* personalities become objects of veneration, provides a rich source of copy for the print and electronic media.

The role of the Thai-language press has been crucial to the production of religious populism in recent decades. Competition between the more sensationalist national dailies such as *Thai Rath*, *Daily News*, and *Khao Sot*, is intense, with each trying to secure sales by exclusive coverage of page one stories. Sex scandals, political corruption, graphic photographs of the dismembered bodies of accident victims, blood-chilling crimes, and national sporting triumphs, as well as tales of supernatural and magical phenomena, commonly fill the pages of these newspapers. Accounts of a particular figure's reputed prophetic, healing, and protective powers are often reported as news items by *Thai Rath*, *Daily News*, and *Khao Sot*. In contrast, more highbrow dailies such as the Thai-language *Siam Rath*, *Matichon*, and *Phu-jat-kan* ('The Manager'), and the English-language *Bangkok Post* and *The Nation* rarely make reports of magical and supernatural phenomena into front page news stories, with

accounts of popular devotionalism in these papers being more commonly reported in a critical or disbelieving tongue-in-cheek style, and being relegated to an inside page.

However, continual reporting of the reputed magical powers of a religious figure or icon by the larger circulation sensationalist dailies can create a media-induced charismatic aura and establish a self-reinforcing circuit of charismatic inflation whereby the more a particular figure is sought out and the more he is reported, the more his popularity increases. Once a focus of supernatural power or charisma is established then, under certain conditions, it can continue to attract more and more followers in an almost exponential process. Such charismatic appeal is then not merely a sacral phenomenon, but also derives from the power of the contemporary mass media to manufacture and circulate influential images and symbols. The mass media simultaneously facilitate and incite this exponential process, becoming agents promoting the fame and reputation of a cultic figure. I have elsewhere (Jackson, 1999) traced the role of the Thai press in the production of the phenomenal mass popularity of the movement surrounding Luang Phor Khoon.

Nevertheless, there are limits to the expanding popularity of personality-based movements, especially those that surround a living figure such as a Buddhist monk. Human factors impose limits upon the exponential increase in the popularity of a personality-focused movement: one man can do only so much, and human finitude provides an upper limit to the influence of such a movement. When the man at the centre of a devotional movement tires from overwork, becomes ill, or passes away, the process of exponential charismatic inflation may come undone, being followed by a process of rapid charismatic deflation. *Bangkok Post* journalist Tunya Sukpanich has written about the collapse of formerly popular religious movements, noting that

[A] problem in Thai society is that the average Buddhist follows and respects particular monks rather than the Buddhist teachings themselves. Therefore, when highly respected monks pass away . . . [their] temple loses its members, who, in turn seek the guidance of other monks.[5]

Conceptualizing religion as commodity

In the era of globalizing markets and telecommunications technologies, our understanding of the religion/capitalism matrix is in flux. Classical

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[5]   *Bangkok Post* (Internet edition), 5 May 1996, 'Donated temple funds, are they being spent honestly?', by Tunya Sukpanich.

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arguments about the relationship between religion and capitalism were dominated by Weber's so-called Protestant ethic thesis and his account of the disenchantment of the social and cultural worlds in the face of the instrumental rationality of industrialization and modernity. However, as Roberts (1995:2) points out:

in an era of resurgent capitalism [since the collapse of the Soviet bloc] there is a mutual and dynamic relation between religion and economic processes, involving in some contexts the growth of new forms of religiosity in the context of economic activity and wealth creation itself.

Central to the issue of how we are to understand Thai prosperity movements is the question of whether they are religions or commercial enterprises that commodify religious symbolisms as just another range of products in the Thai market-place. Writing in the early days of the boom, Apinya Feungfusakul (1993) was among the first to consider the religious efflorescence of the 1990s as a Thai 'religious market place' in which ritual participation merged with consumption. There is no doubt that sales of the ritual products associated with the movements generated vast sums of money and provided a source of largesse for many monasteries and their market-savvy abbots and close lay followers. However, from an analytical perspective, the religion/business distinction is perhaps a false one, in that it forces us to define arbitrarily what should be classed as 'genuine religion' (presumably untainted by the market) and what should be dismissed as profane 'commercialism'. The local relevance of this distinction remains important in understanding the vociferous critiques of commodified religion that have become so prevalent since 1997 and which I discuss in the concluding section. However, as students of religiosity we need to break out of the analytical dead end that would have us separate religion and economics, and instead see spirituality and the market as interpenetrating domains rather than categorically distinct and incompatible aspects of human life.

Rather than being seen as traditional religions structured upon a firm distinction between the sacred and the profane, the Thai prosperity movements need to be seen as symbolic complexes that draw upon religious, economic, political, and other sources to create systems of meaning. I agree with Jean Comaroff (1994:303–04) when she proposes that we need to regard Asian forms of capitalism as 'signifying systems', and contemporary forms of religion in East and South East Asia as 'evidence of the symbolic richness of the modern mind . . . in response to an explosion of market commodities'. My only quibble with Comaroff's

proposition is that I would replace her use of 'modern' with 'postmodern', for the Thai prosperity movements cannot be described as modernist expressions of religiosity based on notions such as rationalization, doctrinalism, or demythologization. Nevertheless, Comaroff's key insight is valid, namely, that in the 1990s marketized social relations were at the core of cultural production in Thailand, superseding political considerations as the dominant force in initiating and directing change in expressions of religiosity.

Adopting a symbolic approach leads us beyond an analysis in which 'religion', 'economy', 'popular culture', 'media', and 'politics' are conceived as discrete domains whose relations then need to be described and theorized, enabling us to see them as inter-relating semiotic domains marked by hierarchy and contestation. A symbolic analysis also helps us rethink the religion–capitalism relationship and leads us beyond a critical focus on the Thai prosperity movements as a commercialization of religion, a view which dominates many Thai academic accounts (for example Dhammapidok, 1997), to consider them from an alternative perspective as spiritualizations of the market.

There are also practical reasons for adopting a market-based approach to analysing the prosperity movements. In order to understand recent trends in Thai religiosity we need to divert our gaze away from the organization of the Buddhist *sangha* to the domain of popular culture. In the past decade significant changes have occurred in religious symbolism and the focuses of ritual practice without any accompanying change in the legal or constitutional place of Theravada Buddhism. Therefore, to understand the direction of religious change in boom time Thailand we cannot rely on a study of laws or formal pronouncements on Buddhism. We must even look outside the monastery, to department stores, shopping malls, and market-places, for it is in these locations that new forms of Thai religiosity were most visibly expressed, where popular religion was packaged, marketed, and consumed. It is iconic of the wealth-focus of the prosperity religions that one was just as likely to find their cultic objects in commercial spaces as in traditional sacred localities such as monasteries. It is because of the importance of the market in determining forms of religiosity during the boom years that studies which consider religion only in terms of power/knowledge relations in villages or in state institutions are no longer adequate in explaining the relations between Thai religiosity and society.

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Popular religion: the neglected heart of 1990s Thai political economy

This study is intended as a corrective to a dominant trend in Thai area studies within which analysis of religion has often been isolated as the academic enclave of anthropologists and historians. With only a few exceptions (such as McCargo), political scientists and economists of Thailand typically neglect religion. Despite a plethora of statistical studies of the performance of different sectors of the Thai economy in recent decades, no economist has attempted to measure how much money was spent in temple construction, merit-making donations to monasteries and religious foundations, or speculative investment in amulets and other ritual objects during the boom years. The commodification of religion is one of the most contentious political issues in Thailand today, with accusations of clerical corruption and financial self-aggrandisement dominating the press and becoming objects of parliamentary inquiries.[6] However, we have no idea how much money circulated within the religious sector of the Thai economy in the 1990s. The current controversies about commercialized Buddhism emerge from nothing more than scattered perceptions and unsystematic anecdotes, not from actual figures of rates of growth (or more recently of contraction) in the religious sector of the economy. The failure to include religion as an important category of both production and consumption in Thailand means that a significant sector of the economy has been excluded from quantitative analysis. This failure emerges from the Eurocentrism of the 'hard' disciplines of economics and political studies – even as practised within Thai universities – which, in using the history of the West as their model, mistakenly imagine religion in all societies to be a separate domain that is isolated from the market and from political struggles over the allocation of resources. Pasuk and Sungsidh (1994) have attempted to measure the extent of corruption and the size of Thailand's black economy. This type of study needs to be extended to include quantitative research on the religious sector of the economy.

While the media and the market are central to this study of boom time religiosity, politics and power are also important in understanding the cultural prominence of the prosperity movements. I have argued (Jackson,

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6 In January 1999, *The Nation* reported that at least ten different inquiries into the activities of Wat Phra Dhammakaya and its abbot were being conducted by various government and monastic agencies. (*The Nation*, 15 January 1999, 'Dhammakaya blocks assets probe', p. A2.)

1997, 1999) that from the 1980s to the mid-1990s, the Thai state withdrew from its historical role of controlling expressions of Buddhist religiosity and that its place was increasingly taken by the market. Power remains central to the social analysis of Thai religion, but in the 1990s power was modulated through different channels and took new forms. In earlier studies (Jackson, 1988[a], 1989) I argued that Thai Buddhism has historically played an important symbolic role in supporting the state, both under the absolute monarchy and in the years since 1932. Here I suggest a revised version of that 'legitimation' thesis to account for the political importance of the prosperity religions.

Religious practices retain a political currency in Thailand because of their continuing association with notions of power. However, the domain over which that charismatic sacral power has influence has now expanded to include the economy. Furthermore, in the globalizing 1990s, Thailand had no single locus of power, but rather multiple sources of influence which included: the charismatic authority of the monarchy as symbol of national unity; the economic influence of Sino-Thai business groups; the legislative power of politicians; and the long-standing administrative power and brute force of the civilian and military bureaucracies. In this situation, the symbolic complex of prosperity religions can be seen as a cultural expression of a fragile politico-economic accommodation that was reached between these diverse players during the boom years. Symbolic connections between different religious forms reproduced at the level of culture the symbiotic relationships that came to exist between the monarchy, the military and civilian bureaucracies, Sino-Thai business groups, and the Thai peasantry refashioned as an industrial labour force. All of these groups saw their interests as being promoted by collaboration in support of the continuation of the boom. The economy provided a common link for all these political players, just as wealth acquisition provided the symbolic core of the prosperity movements.

A complex of explanatory narratives

In my previous research on Thai Buddhism (Jackson, 1988, 1989, 1991, 1997[b]) I have been interested in describing the relations between Thai religion and areas of social and political life that are usually seen as 'non-religious'. I have not sought to understand Thai religion only as a domain of private meanings but also as a public phenomenon that is integral to the conduct of everyday life. In this study I continue this emphasis on Thai religion as a public phenomenon. Hence I am concerned

not only with what Thai people believe but also how doctrines, ritual practices, devotional images, and sacred spaces intersect with struggles for political power, efforts to establish material well-being, and the quest for national self definition and cultural identity.

My accounts of the rise of Thai prosperity religions and their convergence into a symbolic complex do not take the form of a single narrative but rather recount several interrelated stories from Thailand's recent history. The symbolically rich devotional movements surrounding Rama V, Kuan Im, and various prosperity monks each emerged at the intersection of a complex network of economic, political, ethnic, and religious influences. To tell the full story of the prosperity religions one would need to relate the entire history of boom-time Thailand, for the movements touched upon all the influences, groups, and individuals who participated in the country's recent transformation. My accounts are necessarily partial and selective. However, the rise of marketized forms of religiosity considered here is closely related to some of the more important stories to be told of Thailand's roaring 1990s.

The broad phenomenon of the prosperity religions first tells the story of the retreat of the state from directing cultural production and influencing the form of images of national and cultural identity. Political economist Pasuk Phongpaichit has described the efflorescence of Thailand's civil society, the rise of a marketized social formation, and 'the decline of the state' as dominant themes in the Thai studies literature of the late 1990s:

Strikingly, analysts approaching from many different disciplines – economics, political economy, geography, cultural studies – and from many different political perspectives, have all tended towards a similar conclusion (Pasuk, 1999:3).

Unlike some other religious movements in modern Thai history, such as the royal-initiated Thammayut order of Buddhist monks (see Ishii, 1986; Jackson, 1989; Somboon, 1982), the complex of prosperity religions did not emerge as the result of any state-initiated policy or from the charismatic influence of any single religious figure. The complex developed as a devotional expression of popular culture and a coalescence of a diverse range of symbolic forms. Paralleling the market, the complex was a product of the actions of a multitude of players engaging in symbolic exchange within both religious and commercial spaces. However, while the state was not involved in the creation of this religious phenomenon, it increasingly appropriated it as the boom continued, lending official support to a form of religious expression which incorporated

Buddhism as one element in a larger symbolic framework dominated by the market and capitalist enterprise. At a different level, the symbolic syncretism and religious convergence of the complex of movements reflects the story of the economic, social, and political integration of state-aligned power élites, Sino-Thai business groups, and the rural and urban working classes into a new social formation under the integrating signifier of the market.

The individual prosperity movements also reflect other important stories from recent Thai history. In the Rama V movement we can detect anxieties surrounding the future of the monarchy; the popularity of Kuan Im tells us about the further integration of the ethnic Chinese into the heart of the Thai polity; and movements surrounding magic monks such as Luang Phor Khoon indicate the continuing relevance of village-based symbolisms in the culture of Thai cities inhabited by millions of rural migrants. Indeed, the popularity of the prosperity movements in Thailand's cities can be seen as reflecting a rustication of urban Thai culture.[7] With the mass relocation of rural men and women to take up jobs in the urban economy, rural religious forms also migrated to the centre of spaces that were formerly the preserve of élite urbane cultural expression.

Critiques of the prosperity religions tell another story. Since late 1997 a type of 'culture war' has been raging in Thailand, with clerical and lay Buddhist intellectuals as well as parliamentary members of the ruling Democrat Party launching intense public condemnations of commodified religion (see Jackson, unpublished). As a key medium through which notions of national identity continue to be understood, religion has become a focus for anxious self-recrimination, as Thais from many backgrounds seek answers to the painful question, 'where did we go wrong?' The Thai response to the economic crash has not been merely to institute a series of political and bureaucratic reforms in line with IMF guidelines but also to seek to reform Thai religious culture to avoid what are now seen as 'the mistakes of the past'.

Beyond these many narratives of a highly mobile and increasingly affluent population is the story of the intersection of a premodern and often rural form of religion with the engine of global capital. While the boom radically disrupted the subsistence agrarian social formation and

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[7] Thanks to Kevin Hewison for his observations on the rustication of urban Thai culture. The growing popularity of Thai 'country music', *phleng luk-thung*, in Bangkok and the success in the late 1990s of radio station Luk Thung FM in the capital, broadcasting on the 'prestigious' FM band rather than a 'downmarket' AM frequency, is just one example of the spread of rural culture into the heart of the city.

its cultural/symbolic forms, it was simultaneously radically productive of a new marketized urban social formation and associated cultural order. What is stunning about Thai cultural life in the 1990s is that the destruction of the old and the creation of the new occurred in tandem, as an all but seamless process. Within a period of less than a decade, precapitalist symbolisms were resignified in capitalist terms, being given new vitality in the process of their commodification. The rapidity and seamlessness of this cultural transformation reflects a convergence between the forms of discursive and semiotic production in premodern rural Thai culture and the commodified postmodern urban culture of 1990s globalizing Bangkok.

In this convergence of Thai premodernity and postmodernity, modernity and its associated discourses of state-based rationally guided national development (see Reynolds, 1991) were elided. Indeed, the complex of prosperity religions represented a symbolic alternative to existing nationalist narratives of modernization. These narratives, which have dominated many state and academic discourses for most of the twentieth century, are founded upon notions of a strong centrist Buddhist state and doctrinal interpretations of Buddhism as scientific and rational (see Jackson, 1991). Buddhist doctrinalists imagine their religion as a standardized, internally coherent set of beliefs and related practices. In contrast, within popular Thai religiosity, orthopraxy, that is, proper ritual observance and religious practice, is more important than orthodoxy, or correct doctrinal belief. Doctrinal Buddhists criticize popular Thai religion as 'superstitious' (*saiyasat*) or 'supernatural' (*sasana phi*, 'religion of spirits/ ghosts'; *theu phi sang thewada*, 'believing in ghosts, spirits, and gods'), derogatory labels that they use to distance themselves from what they see as the 'foolish' (*ngo*), 'irrational' (*mai mi het-phon*) beliefs of the uneducated that they, as modern Thais, have grown out of.

It is not surprising, then, that the main bearers of Thai modernity in the 1990s, the professional and educated middle classes, appear to be the only section of the Buddhist population who did not participate in the symbolic complex. This is not because they were excluded. The complex is based on an incorporative principle of syncretic inclusivism. Thai intellectuals did not participate in the prosperity religions because they excluded themselves, being repelled by their 'irrational' supernaturalism, morally disgusted by their brash commercialism, and aesthetically mortified by their kitsch eclecticism. Many were also extremely wary of the movements' conservative political associations with the armed forces and corrupt populist politicians.

Intellectual vertigo

There is a need for new approaches to understanding religious cultures that takes account of the rapid marketization of all aspects of social life. We need ways to imagine and conceptualize the intensification and indeed acceleration of processes of cultural intersection in which increasingly complex and often evanescent cultural forms have become the norm. In Thailand in the 1990s all ethnographies of urban culture became historical studies of already superseded cultural forms, long before the research was ever written up or published. The contemporary moment has become ever briefer as cultural forms such as religion have taken on the characteristics of fads and fashions that are 'in' one minute and *passé* and outmoded the next.

In telling some of the many stories of the prosperity religions, I hope to leave the reader feeling at least a little bit dizzy. Vertigo, or some sense of disorientation, has been at the centre of cultural experience and cultural expression in 1990s Thailand. Whether one's focus is on religious culture, erotic culture, music, art, architecture, fashion, or any other domain, then complexity, the radical juxtaposition of disparate elements, hybridity, speed, and intensity are all common themes. In the spirit of participant observation, I believe that the only way to begin to develop an account of contemporary Thai cultural life is to insert oneself into the centre of this vortex long enough for the dynamic patterns that organize its forms to become apparent.

The intensity of cultural intersections in the 1990s induces much more than sensory or aesthetic vertigo. These intersections also induce intellectual and theoretical disorientation, for the diverse elements that are juxtaposed in contemporary Thai cultural life come from domains that were previously isolated as the objects of study of discrete academic disciplines and separate lines of specialized inquiry. If we vainly try to limit our analyses to those which in the past may have been called political, economic, historiographical, or ethnographic, then we will have denatured the central experiences of complexity, speed, and intensity that define cultural life in cities such as Bangkok. It is not possible to stand outside the cultural storm and claim to be able to describe, let alone analyse it from the ultimately illusory standpoint of an established academic tradition. I am not claiming that established academic disciplines are irrelevant. However, in order to grasp processes of cultural hybridization in the context of globalizing capitalism, we need to become accustomed to the clash and intersection of different disciplines, as well

as to the mixing and juxtaposition of radically different cultural elements, practices, images, and beliefs.

Histories of the prosperity religions

Parallels and precedents

Neither syncretism nor an emphasis on improving luck and acquiring wealth are novel features of Thai religiosity. Despite the central place of Buddhism in official discourses of national and cultural identity (Jackson, 1991; Reynolds, 1991), Thai religion has always been a highly syncretic fusion of animist, Brahmanical, and Buddhist elements (Kirsch, 1977). The linking of different prosperity religions into a loose symbolic complex is a contemporary expression of long-standing patterns of religious syncretism. Furthermore, while the central place of the market in the prosperity movements is a new phenomenon in Thai religion, cults of wealth and commerce have long existed.

Thai ritual magic has long been relied upon to promote commercial activities. It is not uncommon for small traders in markets or footpath hawkers to display phallic-shaped amulets, *palat khik*, positioned with the head of the phallus facing the customer, alongside their items for sale in order to promote economic 'fertility'. Historically, Theravada Buddhism has also provided blessings for prosperity as part of the concern to promote the well-being of followers, it being customary for Thai monks to end their sermons with blessings for happiness (*khwam-suk*) and prosperity (*khwam-jarern*). It is also customary for Buddhist monks to bless the opening of a new shop or the inauguration of a new commercial undertaking. For example, all Thai Airways International airliners are ritually blessed by senior monks, often the Supreme Patriarch of the Thai *sangha*. Premodern Theravada precedents for the 1990s movements can also be found in the honouring of the *arahant* Siwali (Pali, Sivali),[8]

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[8] According to a devotional booklet dedicated to Siwali (P. Suwan, 1996), Buddhist legend has it that this early member of the *sangha* remained in his mother's womb for seven years, seven months, and seven days before being born, a numerologically auspicious miracle which conferred on him 'great fortune', *mahalap*. The term 'fortune', *lap* (from Pali, *labh*), has multiple connotations in Thai, denoting the good fortune to achieve spiritual enlightenment as well as material prosperity. While only a minor figure in Thai Buddhism, images of Siwali, who is represented as a *phra thudong* or wandering ascetic carrying a furled parasol over his shoulder, are not uncommon in monasteries, and statuettes of this Theravada Buddhist saint of fortune are sold in all Thai amulet and religious icon markets.

a contemporary of the Buddha, and in the worship of the goddess Nang Kwak,[9] long regarded as a patron deity of Thai shop owners. Furthermore, the religion of the southern Chinese who migrated to Thailand in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also included a significant emphasis on 'gods of wealth' (Alexeiev, 1928). These premodern religions of wealth provided antecedents for the movements of the 1990s. The novelty of the 1990s movements lies not in their form but in their prominence. The question addressed here is what transformed devotion to commercially gained wealth from a minor strand to a dominant mode of religious expression in Thailand in less than a decade.

The example of premodern Chinese gods of wealth also shows that Thailand's prosperity religions are far from unique in Asia. Keyes and others (1994:9) have observed that in the 1990s

> a number of 'new religions' have emerged in various parts of Asia; these religions continue to interpret worldly events as the manifestation of cosmic forces, but they do not foresee an immediate end to the existing order. The religions are 'new' in that they have drawn together an eclectic variety of symbols from foreign and local religions to clothe traditional cosmological ideas.

Thai prosperity religions bear many similarities to what Foard has called Japanese 'endemic religion', which emerged in the context of that

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[9]   The most important Thai prosperity movement before the 1990s was focused on Nang Kwak, the popular name given to Suphawadi (Pali, Subhavadi), a female figure from Buddhist legend. According to a devotional booklet (Wiphutthayokha, n.d.) dedicated to Nang Kwak, at the time of the Buddha, a Brahmin family which made its living from trade had a beautiful daughter named Suphawadi. As the family travelled the north Indian countryside selling goods from their wagon, they chanced to meet the *arahant* Kassapa and after listening to his sermon became followers of the Lord Buddha. As the family took leave of the saint, he blessed their young daughter, saying, 'May your wishes be fulfilled and may you progress and prosper with wealth, silver, and gold from your trading enterprise'. Some time later, the family met another *arahant*, Siwali, the saint of fortune. Siwali gave Suphawadi the same blessing that had been conferred by Kassapa. From that time the family's business flourished and they became extremely wealthy, attributing their good fortune to the blessings of the two *arahants*. Images of Nang Kwak represent her as a smiling, dark-eyed Indian-looking young woman sitting in a kneeling position with her right hand raised in a beckoning gesture. The action of beckoning with the hand is called *kwak* in Thai and Nang Kwak literally means 'the beckoning woman'. Shop owners believe that her image beckons customers and improves business. Before the rise of the new prosperity movements, an image of Nang Kwak could be found installed on an altar attached to the back wall of almost every small- to medium-sized store and restaurant in Thailand. In the 1990s, Nang Kwak came to share her space on shop altars with images of King Rama V, Kuan Im, and various prosperity monks. In many cases, these latter figures appear to have displaced Nang Kwak, who became a marginal figure in wealth-oriented devotional practice in the boom years.

country's rapid industrialization in the 1960s and 1970s. According to Foard (cited in Keyes and others, 1994:10–11), Japanese endemic religion is

a kind of minimal religious practice that absolutely every Japanese participates in to some degree and which helps bind the Japanese together. . . . Japanese endemic religion is nurtured by mass media and an elaborate commercialisation of ritual goods and services. . . . Endemic religion derives its authority from its practice, which generates 'tradition' as an ongoing process. Because endemic religion is pervasive, representatives of the state may manipulate its rich associations to bolster national identity. At the same time the diffuse authority of endemic religion can be invoked by a variety of different interests and used to generate new meanings, including ones that run counter to those promoted by the state.

The parallels between new forms of religious expression in 1960s Japan and 1990s Thailand are stunning. While not all Thais participated in the boom-time prosperity religions, like Japanese endemic religion these movements did contribute to social cohesion, involved the commodification of religious products, were based on ritual practices rather than doctrine or teaching, were nurtured by the press and mass media, and became intimately linked with the state. Comparative experience suggests that prosperity religions are associated with periods of rapid growth in capitalist Theravada and Mahayana Buddhist societies which have relatively unfettered press and electronic media. These movements are religious expressions of the impact of new communications technologies and economic arrangements upon highly syncretic Buddhist cultures, and reflect shifting notions of cultural and national identity as entire societies reimagine their positions within global networks over very short time frames.

Much research still needs to be done in order to understand the full extent of the nexus between religion and the economy that emerged in Thailand in the 1990s. Here I summarize some of the key features of the prosperity movements that have been reported in work published to date and in some of the research currently under way. Nithi (1993) wrote one of the first Thai analyses of the worship of King Rama V, and Irene Stengs (unpublished) and Sean Kirkpatrick (University of Wisconsin, Madison) are currently conducting detailed studies of this movement. Nithi (1994) was also one of the first to study the incorporation of the worship of Kuan Im into Thai religious ritual and symbology, and Annette Hamilton (unpublished) is now conducting research on this phenomenon. I have analysed the movement surrounding the most prominent

Theravada monk associated with the prosperity religions, Luang Phor Khoon, abbot of Wat Ban Rai monastery in Nakhonratchasima Province (Jackson, 1999). However, analyses of how other monks such as Luang Phor Ngern and Luang Phor Sot became linked to the movements are still to be written.

The worship of King Chulalongkorn, Rama V

The worship of King Chulalongkorn (r. 1868–1910) or Rama V appears to have begun in the 1980s and was initially focused on an equestrian statue of the king that stands in the middle of the Royal Plaza in front of the Anantasamakhom Throne Hall in Bangkok. Among followers, the spirit of King Chulalongkorn is variously called *Sadet Phor* ('royal father') R. 5, or simply R. 5 (*ror ha*), 'The Fifth R.', an abbreviation of the 'The Fifth Reign (*ratchakan*) [of the Chakri Dynasty]'. In devotional literature and official discourses, King Chulalongkorn is often called Phra Piyamaharat, 'the dearly beloved great king', and the annual celebration of his birthday in October is called 'the day of the dearly beloved great king' (*wan piyamaharat*). This movement draws on Brahmanical ideas of the *deva-raja* or 'god-king' which surrounded the Siamese monarchy in the Ayutthaya period and whose echoes persist to the present day. Nithi summarizes the beliefs of followers of this movement as follows:

After King Chulalongkorn passed away, he was reborn in a spiritual realm as a divine being (*thep*), and because of his great mercy (*metta*) for all human beings he disseminates his charismatic power (*phra barami*) to aid and look after those who have faith in him. He has manifested miracles (*patihan*) on many occasions, which are confirmations of this faith (Nithi, 1993:11).

Each Tuesday and Thursday evening – the weekdays associated with Rama V's birthday and 'teacher's day', respectively, in Thai astrology – crowds of the faithful flock to the equestrian statue in Bangkok. They sit on mats laid out on the asphalt and set up foldaway tables as temporary altars on which to display devotional offerings believed to be loved by the king: French cognac, Cuban cigars, pink roses, and fruit. Incense and candles are also lit. Garlands of marigold flowers are offered to the statue, being ritually placed on the pedestal and then returned to the offerers to be taken home as spiritually empowered mementoes. A special Pali mantra (Thai, *khatha*) seeking Rama V's blessing may be chanted silently, or followers may pray for a specific boon while kneeling before the statue. A Thai classical dance troupe and orchestra are often on hand,

ready to be hired to perform by those who wish to entertain the spirit of the monarch in fulfilment of a boon that has been granted. In the mid-1990s tens of thousands of people thronged the Royal Plaza every Tuesday and Thursday night throughout the year, causing traffic jams and forcing the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration to impose no-parking and no-hawking restrictions in the immediate vicinity of the statue. The municipal police force now oversees proceedings, in much the same way as it has done for several decades in the vicinity of the highly popular Erawan Shrine for the Hindu god Brahma near the Erawan Hotel.

While the equestrian statue is the original site and remains the geographical focus of the movement, the image of Rama V is now found throughout urban Thailand. Every jewellery shop in the country, as well as many gift shops, sell amulets with Rama V's image, which are worn as lockets or hung from motor vehicle rear vision mirrors. Altars or *hing bucha* ('worship shelf') with one or more images of King Rama V are found in almost every small- to medium-sized shop in Bangkok, as well as in most department stores. It is also common to find images of Rama V, often with images of the current monarch, King Bhumipol or Rama IX, in close proximity to the most important Buddha image in Thai monasteries, that is, within the heart of the country's most sacred Buddhist spaces. *The Nation* columnist Chang Noi (pseud.), whose labelling of the prosperity movements as 'superstitious' places him or her within the doctrinal Buddhist camp, has observed:

the image of Chulalongkorn lives on in the present day. It has become the focus of a form of national cult . . . the image [of the king] turns up on racks of posters between Bon Jovi and Madonna; on shrines at shops, restaurants, go-go bars and brothels; among the ranks of Hindu and Chinese deities called upon to provide good fortune; and partnered with images of monks like Luang Phor Khoon who also offer comforting promises of good fortune. For the mass of people . . . [King Chulalongkorn is] part of superstitious belief in the power of fate and fortune . . . the idea that development would reduce the role of superstition now belongs to the past. We know instead that development simply turns superstitious practice into a commercial opportunity.[10]

In his study, Nithi observed that Rama V amulets and images are associated with 'improving commerce' and 'making you loved and trusted by people who meet you, so you can conduct your business undertakings successfully' (Nithi, 1993:31). He explains the rapid rise in the popularity

[10] *The Nation*, 26 December 1997, 'Lessons from history: globalisation revisited', by Chang Noi (pseud.), p. A5.

of the movement in the early 1990s as reflecting the needs of a rapidly expanding, commercially involved urban middle class that did not see the concerns generated by its business interests and middle class lifestyles being addressed by existing religious forms, which instead directed their attention towards either the rural peasantry or the state and the monarchy. Nithi describes the Rama V movement as being different from previous Thai personality-based religions in that it was not originally associated with rituals which sought supernatural assistance in assuring invulnerability (*khong kraphan*), seeking love potions (*ya sane*), or acquiring sudden wealth by winning the lottery. Rather, he argues that the original purpose of this cult was to 'seek an increase in wealth from one's own business' (Nithi, 1993:32). However, while Rama V amulets and images were not originally associated with traditional Thai supernatural interests, my observations on visits in the mid-to-late-1990s suggest that these ritual objects had become incorporated within established patterns of Thai supernaturalism. This suggests the expansion of the Rama V movement from its urban, middle class, and business-focused origins to other sections of the population, notably urban and rural labourers.

The worship of Kuan Im

Kuan Im, or Kuan Sri Im, is the Thai rendering of Guan Yin, the name given by the Chinese to a female form of the Mahayana Buddhist *bodhisattva* Avalokites'vara (Thai, Awalokitesuan), whose Sanskrit name Nithi (1994) glosses as 'the lord who looks down (upon us with mercy)'. In Mahayana Buddhism, Avalokites'vara is considered to be the *bodhisattva* of compassion, and in China this saint-god is believed to be a blessed being who can take a female form and assuage the suffering of the faithful. In China, Kuan Im is also the focus of a fertility cult, and her assistance is sought by women seeking to become pregnant. In Thailand, Kuan Im is also called the 'goddess dressed in white' (*thephi nai chut khao*) and 'the blessed mother of mercy' (*phrae mae metta*). Nithi (1994:79) sees the worship of Kuan Im as having similar commercial objectives to those of the Rama V movement, with followers of both devotional movements seeking good luck, fortune, and wealth (*chok, lap, khwam-mang-khang*). He suggests that 'in Thailand Kuan Im is somewhat akin to a goddess of commerce' (Nithi, 1994:86), which reflects her long-standing associations with fertility, wealth, and prosperity in Chinese religious practice.

The popularity of Kuan Im in Thailand is reflected in the widespread

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availability of amulets and other products bearing her image, as well as a large volume of often anonymous devotional literature (for example, Anonymous [a], n.d.; Anonymous [b], n.d.; Klum Bua Hima [pseud.], 1993). Nithi (1994:80) notes that images of Kuan Im are often found on shop altars beneath those of Rama V or members of the current royal family, usually King Bhumipol or Crown Princess Sirinthorn. Unlike the Rama V movement, the worship of Kuan Im in Thailand has no single shrine or geographical focus but rather there are numerous sacred sites devoted to her. These sites are called *samnak*, 'temples', if they have resident male and/or female spiritual officiaries, and *tamnak* or *sala*, 'shrines', if they merely house an image of the goddess. Kuan Im temples are located separately from Theravada Buddhist monasteries. However, it is increasingly common for shrines with her image to be found within the grounds of monasteries. Nithi noted that even in the first half of the 1990s, the worship of both Rama V and Kuan Im was beginning to be incorporated within Theravada Buddhism:

[The Rama V and Kuan Im movements] have arisen and developed outside the monastery [that is, outside of Buddhism] and also tend to be followed outside the monastery. Nevertheless, even though the cults of King Chulalongkorn and Jao Mae Kuan Im arose outside the monastery, they have very quickly spread extensively within the monastery, which makes these two . . . cults so exceptionally interesting (Nithi, 1994:106).

However, unlike images of Rama V, in my inspections of urban and rural monasteries, I have not observed Kuan Im images installed within the primary temple building or *bot* that houses the main Buddha image, and which is considered the most sacred space within a Theravada monastery. Nevertheless, the integration of the worship of Kuan Im into state and royal-sponsored Theravada Buddhism is shown by the installation of a statue of this *bodhisattva* at Wat Bowornniwet, the country's most important royal monastery where male members of the royal family traditionally spend their period as an ordained monk. Wat Bowornniwet is also the residence of the current Supreme Patriarch of the Thai *sangha* and the centre of the clerical university of the Thammayut order of monks founded by King Mongkut (Rama IV) in the first half of the nineteenth century. A metre-high bronze image of Kuan Im was donated to this royal monastery in the second half of the 1990s by a wealthy Sino-Thai patron. In January 1998 the Wat Bowornniwet monastery committee placed half-page colour advertisements in the Thai-language press to

promote the sale of gold, silver, and alloy replicas of the statue in order to raise funds to build a shrine to house the image.[11]

Kuan Im and the rise of jek culture

Kuan Im is worshipped by more than merely Sino-Thais. Many Thais who do not have, or are not aware of having, any Chinese ancestry are also followers. For example, Nithi notes a devotional publication listing the followers of a particular Kuan Im shrine in Bangkok which included the names of many senior Thai civil servants and serving military officers, as well as Sino-Thai business people, commenting that,

in a situation such as this being *jek* is becoming a social condition unrelated to ethnicity . . . it is becoming somewhat meaningless to talk of *jek* or Chinese (*cheua jin*) in contemporary Thai society because it is not possible to say precisely where the identifying characteristics (*ekkalak*) of this group differ from that of Thais. Hence one may say that the cult of Kuan Im is widespread amongst urban 'Thais' (Nithi, 1994:80).

Nithi's expression for Thailand's ethnic Chinese, *jek* (derived from the Tae Jiw [Teo Chiu] Chinese dialect), was originally a colloquial term with derogatory connotations. However, in recent years, *jek* has been appropriated within some Thai academic discourses to describe those ethnic Chinese who have adopted Thai language, religion, and culture, and in this usage it has parallels to the much older Malay term *peranakan*, used to describe the Straits Chinese. Historian Suchit Wongthet, editor of the popular *Art and Culture* (*Sinlapa watthanatham*) monthly magazine to which Nithi has been a frequent contributor in recent years, is one of the key popularizers of the academic use of *jek*.[12] Not all Thai intellectuals like this academic use of *jek*. Thammasat University political scientist Kasian Tejapira (1997) prefers the less loaded expression *luk-jin* ('Chinese descendent') to refer to the Sino-Thai population. Nithi suggests that worship of Kuan Im has become a pervasive urban Thai phenomenon because the *jek*, or Sino-Thai, population has been so thoroughly 'Siamized' that it has become all but impossible to differentiate the Thai and Chinese elements of contemporary urban Thai culture.

The *jek* or ethnic Chinese in Thailand remain Chinese only in form. They do not understand the substance (*neua-ha*) of Chineseness. . . . They cannot even speak 'pure' Chinese, that is, without admixtures of Thai words (Nithi, 1994:86n.).

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[11] *Khao Sot*, 5 January 1998, p.23.

[12] Suchit's 1987 book, *Jek pon Lao* ('Jek mixed with Lao') was a deconstruction of notions of essential Thai culture and ethnicity, claiming that Thai was in effect nothing but a blending of Chinese and Lao.

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However, my own, albeit limited, observations suggest that in the emergence of the worship of Kuan Im as a Sino-Thai or *jek/luk-jin* urban synthesis, the appropriation of Chinese religious culture by the Thai has been just as important as the appropriation of Thai culture by the immigrant Chinese. The contemporary religious prominence of Kuan Im appears to emerge from a parallel Sinicization of the Thai and Siamization of the Chinese. Patrick Jory (private communication) suggests that the Thai appropriation of the Chinese Mahayana *bodhisattva* may draw upon Theravada precedents in the *jataka* literature about the Buddha's former lives. In the Theravada tradition, *bodhisattva* means a Buddha-to-be, and most often refers to the former lives of the man who was to become Gautama Buddha. The *jataka* tales were extremely popular in Thailand before the twentieth century and their recitation often constituted a focus of key annual religious rituals (see Jory, unpublished [a]). However, the extensive *jataka* literature was largely expunged from official monastic education and ritual with the rise of the absolutist state under Rama IV and Rama V, as part of attempts to undermine local expressions of devotional sentiment and impose a centralized national model of official Thai religiosity. The contemporary popularity of Kuan Im may then mark a return in Chinese garb of historical Thai forms of worship of *bodhisattva* saviour figures. Furthermore, while Nithi states that Kuan Im is primarily a goddess of commerce, my observations in the late 1990s indicate that this figure, like Rama V, has begun to be appropriated within existing patterns of Thai supernaturalism, with many Thais regarding Kuan Im as a source of personal protection as much as a promoter of business wealth. It is increasingly common for ethnic Thais from diverse backgrounds to claim a personal relationship with Kuan Im, to wear amulets of her image, and to refrain from eating beef as expressions of their piety.

Writing in the first half of the 1990s, Nithi described the worship of Rama V and Kuan Im as urban phenomena. However, worship of both these figures expanded into the countryside in the second half of the decade. In visits to rural areas of several provinces in north-east Thailand in August 1997 and August 1998, I frequently came across rural dwellers wearing Rama V and Kuan Im amulets, as well as images of Kuan Im located in the grounds of rural monasteries. However, the extent of the penetration of the prosperity religions into the Thai countryside and their significance within rural contexts remain topics for future research.

The worship of auspiciously named prosperity monks

Several Buddhist monks, both living and dead, also became nationally prominent figures linked to the prosperity movements, with their monasteries becoming sites of pilgrimage, their amulets worn to promote business and to provide protection from harm, and their images being placed on house and shop altars as expressions of personal devotion. Most, but not all, of these prosperity monks are reputed to possess supernatural powers and their names are often perceived as being auspiciously linked to good fortune and wealth. The most prominent of the prosperity monks is Luang Phor Khoon, whose name and title translate as 'Reverend Father Multiply'. I have analysed the history and significance of the devotional movement centred on Luang Phor Khoon elsewhere (Jackson, 1999).

Some of the devotional products and literature associated with prosperity monks display a high degree of commercial creativity. For example, in 1997 one Wet Worawit published a 104-page booklet entitled *The auspiciously named spiritual teachers Ngern and Sot*, a compilation of the biographies and miracles attributed to Luang Phor Ngern, a nineteenth-century abbot of Wat Bang Khlan in Phichit Province in mid-north Thailand, and Luang Phor Sot, a twentieth-century abbot of Wat Paknam Phasicharoen in Thonburi, across the Chao Phraya River from Bangkok.[13] The Thai expression for 'cash' is *ngern-sot*, a fortuitous combination of the names of these two well-known monks who lived in different periods, never met in life, and whose distinctive personality cults had never previously been linked. It was the book's lay author-publisher who combined the names of Luang Phor Ngern and Luang Phor Sot to create a symbolic frame for the explicit worship of 'cash'. In the introduction, Wet states that his book will be of particular interest to readers who make their living from trading and business, 'because "cash" (*ngern-sot*) is something that everyone wants'. Wet also included the following advertising sub-heading on the book cover, 'Including a photo to worship cash (*bucha ngern-sot*) and an incantation to call in cash, written and blessed by Phra Acharn Sri-ngern ["blessed money"] Aphatharo'.

Many other ritual products produced by lay people also played upon the commercially auspicious meanings of the names of supernaturally powerful monks. For example, one framed devotional picture produced

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[13] Luang Phor Sot is also considered the spiritual source of the Wat Phra Dhammakaya movement.

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by the Phorn Patihan ('miraculous blessing') Company sold from the gift section of the Thai Tokyu Department Store in Bangkok's Mahboon-khrong Centre in 1997 combined the images of nine monks in sequence – so that their names read out an auspicious message. The names of the nine monks were: Ngern, Thorng, Man, Khong, Khoon, Jarern, Suk, Sot, and Cheun, and the message formed from their names read: 'Wealth (*ngern-thorng*), Security (*man-khong*), Multiply (*khoon*), Progress (*jarern*), Happiness (*suk*), Joyful (*sot-cheun*)'. The following additional message was added beneath the images and names of the monks: 'Enhancing the charisma of the devotee, great fortune, business progresses, wealth flows in, complete health'.

Symbolic integration of the prosperity religions

The worship of Rama V, Kuan Im, and various prosperity monks remained distinct, with each movement continuing to possess a symbolic integrity and existing as a separate focus of devotional ritual. In the case of Rama V, the focus of devotion was the equestrian statue in Bangkok; for Kuan Im, this focus was provided by numerous temples and shrines located both inside and outside Buddhist monasteries; while in the case of individual prosperity monks, the geographical focus of devotion was the monastery of which they are, or were, abbot. However, in the mid-1990s an intensifying process of symbolic integration between these three strands of prosperity religions became evident. This symbolic integration of the prosperity religions was revealed in several phenomena:

- *Interpenetrating sacred spaces.* The installation in sacred spaces dedicated to one religious figure of images and cultic objects linked with one or more of the other prosperity religions.
- *Patterns of accumulative worship.* Individuals integrating the worship of figures from all strands of the symbolic complex into their personal devotions.
- *Symbolic integration in commercial space.* The commercial manufacture of similarly designed lines of ritual products – including statuettes, amulets, wall posters, framed pictures, greeting cards, calendars, and ornamental clocks – which represented all elements of the symbolic complex.
- *Symbolic intersection in a single ritual object.* The production of ritual objects which combined images or textual references to all strands of the prosperity religions in a single item.

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Interpenetrating sacred spaces

As noted above, in the second half of the 1990s it became increasingly common to find images of Rama V installed within Buddhist temples and for shrines dedicated to Kuan Im to be located within the walls of monasteries, as the ritual spaces of the different prosperity movements began to converge within the sacralized domain of Theravada monasteries. There was also a commercial aspect to this interpenetration of sacred spaces. Localities sacred to the various movements – such as monasteries, the Rama V equestrian statue in Bangkok, and Kuan Im temples – often include commercial sites from which it is possible to buy ritual objects. Markets, stores, and hawker stands located in these places commonly sold objects relating to the full panoply of the movements, not merely the devotional products of the figure which was the focus of the locality. Furthermore, similar ranges of ritual products were often marketed from these commercial spaces within sacred sites, with such spaces looking much the same and selling the same sorts of items, wherever they were located in the country.

When I visited the Rama V equestrian statue in December 1996, August 1997, and August 1998, hawkers sold icons and objects dedicated to all the prosperity religions from the backs of parked pick-up trucks. One could visit the equestrian statue and return home with a Luang Phor Khoon amulet or an ornamental wall clock decorated with an image of Kuan Im. Or one could visit the shop attached to the monastery of a prosperity monk and return home with a Rama V amulet and a statuette of Kuan Im, both of which had been blessed by the resident abbot. Just as Thai department store chains across the country sell the same lines of clothes, toiletries, and other consumer items, so too the devotional products of the prosperity religions were standardized and made available nationally by retail sales networks that linked the sacred localities of the various movements to non-religious commercial outlets. Commercial forces reduced devotional objects associated with the different prosperity religions to a common line of products, creating a market-based symbolic convergence.

This phenomenon is far from unique to Thailand or to Asian religions. Roman Catholic amulets, statuary, and other devotional objects sold from religious shops around the Christian world also display the same market-based standardization. Indeed, in visiting the numerous shops selling devotional products located across Vatican City – from the colonnades of St Peter's Square to the base of the cupola of the

dome; immediately outside the Sistine Chapel and throughout the Vatican Museum – one is struck by the similarities with Thai religio-commercial spaces. Geremie Barmé (1996) also observes a remarkably similar phenomenon in the commercial standardization of memorabilia associated with the posthumous cult of Mao Zedong in early 1990s China.

Luang Phor Khoon's monastery, Wat Ban Rai, located in the middle of rice fields, fifty kilometres north-west of the provincial centre of Nakhonratchasima, is the focus for large numbers of stalls and shops selling religious icons, images, and pictures for the complete range of prosperity movements, and is a prominent example of the interpenetration of sacred spaces. On visits to this monastery in August 1997 and again in August 1998, I found a hierarchy of religio-commercial spaces within and immediately outside Wat Ban Rai. A shop selling only Luang Phor Khoon religious objects and staffed by half a dozen lay men occupied one corner of the main sermon hall, a large two-storey building which also housed Khoon's private rooms and the monastery offices. Next to the sermon hall under aluminium roofing, more than 50 lay men and women had their own small stalls selling a variety of religious objects for all the prosperity movements, as well as local handicrafts and herbal remedies. And lining the street immediately outside the monastery, a row of more than half-a-dozen shops also sold objects associated with Khoon, as well as Rama V and Kuan Im. Wat Ban Rai is unusual even by Thai standards in that the amount of space inside the monastery walls dedicated to selling devotional objects is probably larger than the space devoted to religious activities. However, many other monasteries include shops or stalls which retail objects relating to all the prosperity movements.[14]

The popularity and interpenetration of figures associated with the prosperity religions was also apparent in another facet of Thai religiosity, namely, the spirits channelled by mediums (*rang song*). In 1997 the magazine *Mahalap* ('great fortune'), which reports stories of Thai spirit mediums, produced a two-volume guide to what were described as 'leading mediums from all over Thailand' (Anonymous[c], n.d. [c.1997]).

[14] For example, in August 1998 I visited Wat Sra Kaew, a monastery in the north-eastern border town of Norngkhai. This monastery actively promoted tourists to visit and purchase its religious products, having set up signboards every few kilometres along the Mitraphap Highway from Khon Kaen, two hundred kilometres to the south. The monastery is unimpressive, but as one resident monk told me, the abbot was trying to raise enough money to finish construction of a medium-sized temple building. The abbot's fund raising consisted of selling amulets, images, and other devotional objects dedicated to the complete range of prosperity religions.

Volume 1 of this guide included accounts of thirty-eight mediums, with the spirits that they channel representing a cross-section of famous monks, royal spirits, and Brahmanical deities. This single publication alone cannot be said to provide a representative sample of the spirits channelled by Thai mediums. However, it does show that the spirits of Rama V and Kuan Im are popular in Thai spiritualism, and that each has more than one medium. The *Mahalap* book described three separate mediums as channels for Kuan Im and Rama V, respectively. Of the remaining thirty-two mediums profiled, seven channelled the spirits of other Thai kings (three channelled King Narai); ten channelled Hindu deities (three channelled Brahma), and the rest channelled a diverse range of spirits. Nithi (1994:90) has noted that it is not uncommon for mediums to channel more than one spirit, with Kuan Im often being channelled in sequence with a Brahmanical deity, providing a fascinating example of the interpenetration of prosperity religions within the 'spiritual space' of the medium's trance state.

Patterns of accumulative worship

The integration of the prosperity religions into a single complex was also reflected in an accumulative approach to the worship of figures associated with the movements. For example, in the 1990s it was common for the dashboards of Thai taxis, buses, trucks, and private cars to display an array of icons and amulets with images of Rama V, Kuan Im, and prosperity monks such as Luang Phor Khoon. The decoration of motor vehicles with religious and royal iconography has a considerable history, and dashboard images related to the prosperity movements were commonly interspersed with those of sacred Buddha images and venerated monks unrelated to the religio-commercial movements, as well as the royal family.

Privately published devotional literature provided another indicator of the integration of the different prosperity movements in the religious practices of individuals. One example of this literature was a small, fifteen baht pocket book entitled *The charisma of Phra Sayamthewathirat: bringing peace to the nation* (Anonymous [d], 1997), which was sold from major book stores. This booklet was published by the Liang Chiang publishing house in Bangkok as an expression of the owners' religious devotion and a filial honouring of their great-grandfather, Lippo Sae Tiaw, who migrated from southern China and established the business in 1916. This publication gives an idea of the range of deities and monks

honoured by a Sino-Thai business family in Bangkok in the late 1990s. The book opens with a quotation from King Bhumipol on the value of 'effort' (*khwam-phian*) and hard work in creating individual and collective well-being, and then reproduces a series of Pali mantras dedicated to becoming a multimillionaire (*khatha mahasethi*), blessing money (*khatha sek ngern*), and increasing one's attractiveness and charm (*khatha sane*). The remainder of the book reproduces colour images and special mantras dedicated to honouring the following:

- Phra Sayamthewathirat, the patron deity of Siam, whose image appears on the cover and to whom the booklet is dedicated;
- Phra Mae Kuan Im, with a devotional mantra in the Tae Jiw Chinese dialect transcribed into Thai script;
- King Chulalongkorn, here called Phra Piyamaharat Ratchakan Thi 5, 'the beloved great king of the fifth reign'; and
- Ten well-known Buddhist monks, including three linked with the prosperity movements: Luang Phor Ngern, Luang Phor Sot, and Luang Phor Khoon.

Symbolic integration in commercial space

While integration of the prosperity movements became increasingly visible in the intersection of their ritual spaces and in patterns of accumulative worship, it was in commercial space that the symbolic interconnections between the movements was most apparent. Commercial spaces where the full panoply of religio-commercial symbols were displayed included markets for amulets and religious icons, greeting card and gift displays in department stores and gift shops, and private shrines in shops and offices. Within these spaces, symbolisms of the prosperity religions often merged, at times rendering the various movements all but indistinguishable, as the manufacture and display of devotional products created a semiotic effect of unity.

Bangkok has long had markets called *talat phra* (here meaning 'religious [icon] markets') dedicated to the sale of icons and amulets, these commercial spaces considerably pre-dating the boom years and the emergence of the prosperity religions. Established *talat phra* in the city are located next to Wat Ratchanada on Ratchdamnoen Road and at the Jattujak Park weekend market. However, during the boom years new *talat phra* appeared in Bangkok shopping centres at Wang Burapha, Banglamphu, and Panthip Plaza on Petchburi Road. In its integration of capitalism and religiosity, Panthip Plaza is one of the most interesting

talat phra in Bangkok. This mall was built in the early 1980s, and in the 1990s became a shopping centre dedicated almost exclusively to selling computer hardware and software, as well as magical amulets and religious iconography, with some stores in the five-storey complex selling both computers and amulets. Panthip Plaza is a commercial space where the latest electronic technologies are sold side-by-side with supernatural talismans. Combining in one space the electronic magic of the present and the charismatic magic of the past, Panthip Plaza demonstrates the 'hi-tech' relevance of Thai supernaturalism and the compatibility of this belief system with late capitalism and its information technologies.

The accumulative approach to worshipping figures associated with the prosperity religions described above was also reflected in the semiotics of the production, display, and retailing of devotional products. Producers of objects as diverse as New Year greeting cards, wall posters, decorative framed portraits, religious statuary, and amulets manufactured their product lines to almost identical specifications, with images of Rama V, Kuan Im, prosperity monks, and the royal family often becoming interchangeable design elements. The display of these items within retail spaces such as department stores further reinforced the semiotic effect of unity. One found rows of greeting cards, shelves of statuary, and glass cases of amulets in which all the different versions of a particular product line – such as ornamental Rama V, Kuan Im, and Luang Phor Khoon alarm clocks – were displayed side-by-side. The production of lines of products to the same design specifications and their contiguous display on shop shelves of course reflect the requirements of mass production and mass marketing, rather than religious sentiment. However, the market-driven logics of production and retailing created semiotic effects that mirrored the way in which the elements of the symbolic complex were in fact consumed and worshipped. I suggest that Thai producers of ritual objects were able to manufacture all elements of the symbolic complex of prosperity religions to common design specifications, and retailers were able to sell them from the same shelves and display cases, because devotional consumers already perceived them as related.

Retail displays of New Year greeting cards provided one of the most prominent and ubiquitous instances of the co-location of all elements of the prosperity religions within commercial space (Figures 1–3 show examples). In December 1997, I surveyed displays of Christmas and New Year greeting cards in several department stores and malls in
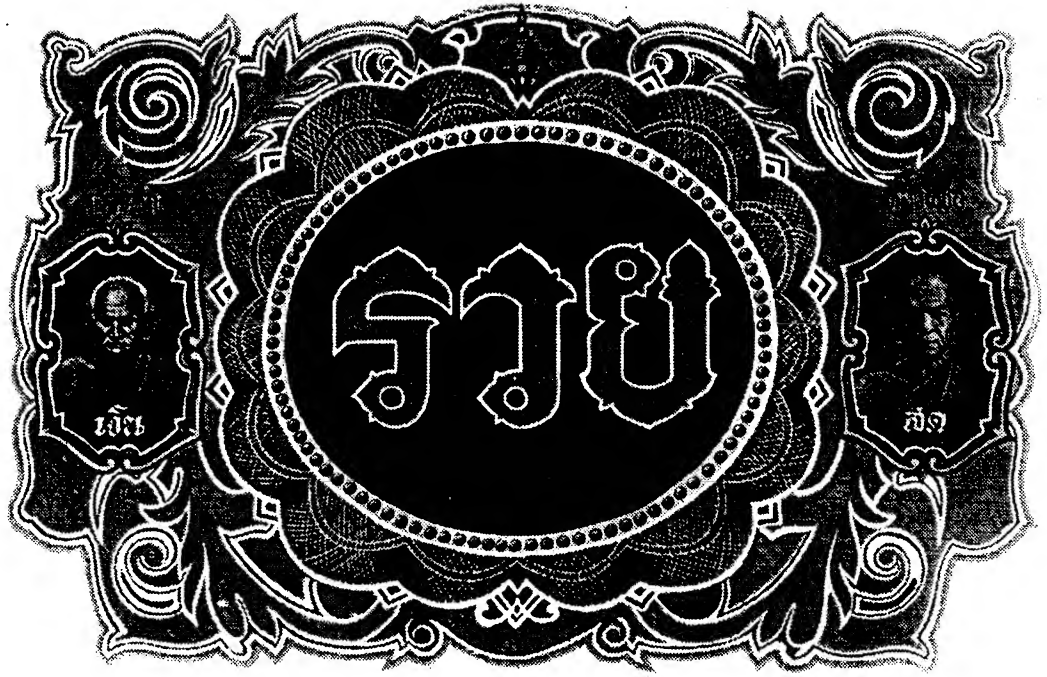
Figure 1.   New Year greeting card with pictures of the monks Reverend Father Ngern and Reverend Father Sot (*ngern-sot* = 'cash') with the text 'Rich' (*ruay*).
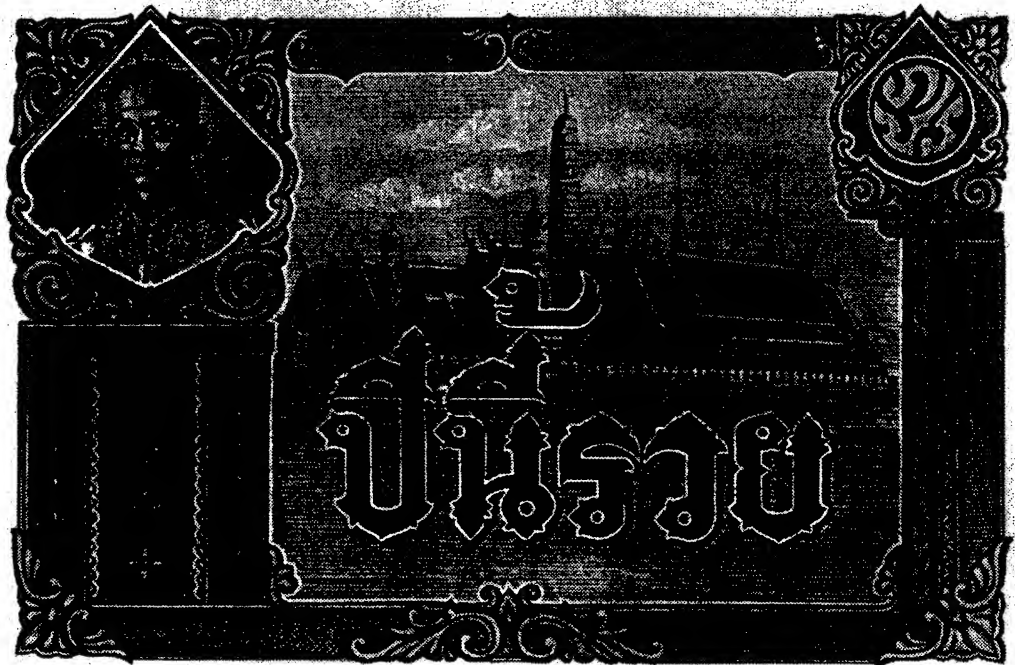

Figure 2.   New Year greeting card with images of King Bhumipol (Rama IX) and the Grand Palace (Bangkok), with the text 'Rich this year' (*pi ni ruay*).

Figure 3.   New Year greeting card with representations of Thai banknotes. combining images of wealth and the monarchy. The text on the cards reads. 'Wishing you a lot of wealth (*khor hai ruay*).

Bangkok: Merry Kings at Saphan Khwai; Mahboonkhrong at Siam Square; Robinson at Silom; and Zen at World Trade Centre. I also surveyed one mall in a large north-eastern city, Robinson in Udonthani. In all these shopping complexes more than half of all greeting cards on sale had images relating to one or other prosperity movement, often in association with images of King Bhumipol and the royal family.[15] In all stores surveyed, cards with images from the symbolic complex of prosperity movements were displayed together on one set of racks, with cards with Western-style Santa Claus and Christmas tree designs being displayed nearby on separate racks.

I suspect that in December 1997 every department store in Thailand, as well as every stationery store and bookshop in the country that sold greeting cards, reproduced the same displays of cards representing the full panoply of the symbolic complex. The fact that more than half of all New Year greeting cards carried an image of one or other element of the complex of prosperity religions suggests that card manufacturers believed that these images were the most popular with Thai consumers, and the prominence and sheer number of these greeting card displays around the country indicated the popularity of these images and the prosperity movements in general.

Another example of the full complement of symbols relating to the prosperity religions appearing on a similarly designed product line was found on a set of eight framed portraits sold for 99 baht a piece by the

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[15] In 1997 the Interproduct Company produced a series of similarly designed cards with images of: Kuan Im (three designs); Luang Phor Khoon; King Bhumipol with his late mother, the Princess Mother; King Bhumipol with King Chulalongkorn (two designs); and King Taksin. The same company produced a second series of cards with images of: Kuan Im (three designs); Rama V; Luang Phor Khoon; King Bhumipol (three designs); King Bhumipol with King Chulalongkorn (two designs); King Bhumipol with Luang Phor Khoon; King Taksin; and Princess Sirinthorn. The T. S. Card Company produced a series of cards with the message 'may you be rich' (*khor hai ruay*) printed on the cover: one card superimposed the message 'may the economy be good, may your business flourish, and may you be rich the entire year' (*khor hai setthakit di kha-khai ram-ruay talort pi*) engraved on a porcelain plate painted with a traditional Thai design. This company also produced a second series which symbolically linked King Bhumipol and wealth by superimposing images of the monarch on representations of old banknotes from the 1940s and 1950s. The T. S. Card Company continued the banknote theme on yet another series of cards designed to look like banknotes and including messages relating to wealth: one card printed the message 'this year you will be rich' (*pi ni ruay*) in red letters on top of an image of the Grand Palace and a portrait of King Bhumipol (Figure 2). Another card printed the single word 'rich' (*ruay*) in bright red letters in the centre of its banknote design, together with images of Luang Phor Ngern and Luang Phor Sot, so that these monks' names spelled 'cash' (*ngern-sot*) – Figure 1.

gift section of the Thai Tokyu Department store in Central Bangkok in December 1997. Each image in this series was printed in colour and had been daubed with a small piece of gold leaf to suggest that it was intended to be used as a devotional object and had been ritually blessed. In Thailand, revered images associated with a devotional cult are honoured by applying small squares of tissue-thin gold leaf. The line of images was produced by a company called Phorn Patihan-Mongkhon Haeng Chiwit ('miraculous blessings-auspicious life'), with a printed note on the back of each frame saying that the image had been blessed in a ritual ceremony (*phan phithi pluk sek*), but not specifying who had performed the ceremony. Some of the more interesting images included in this eight-piece set were:

- The *bodhisattva* Kuan Im, with the message 'enhancing the charisma of the devotee'.
- A composite photograph combining images of a 1,000 baht banknote (including the image of King Bhumipol) and five revered monks: Luang Phor Ngern, Luang Phor Sot, Luang Pu Man, Luang Phor Khong, and Luang Phor Khoon. The names of the five monks were arranged so that they spelt out the message: 'Cash, Security, Multiply' (*ngern-sot man-khong khoon*). The following text was printed at the bottom of the images: 'Multiplying luck; multiplying fortune; money flows in in piles; gold flows in' (*thawi chok thawi lap ngern lai korng thorng lai ma*).
- A composite photograph with images of King Chulalongkorn and King Bhumipol placed side-by-side under the texts: 'Two reigns of prosperity' (*sorng ratchasamai haeng rung-rot*), and 'The devotee will find great fortune and multiplying fruitfulness'.
- Images of Luang Phor Ngern and Luang Phor Sot placed side-by-side so that their names spelt out the word 'cash' (*ngern-sot*), and with the additional message, 'Place this in your home and multiply luck, multiply fortune, promote happiness'.

Symbolic intersection in a single devotional object

The integration of the elements of the prosperity religions is also shown by products which combined symbolic elements from more than one movement within a single image or object. For example, the incorporation of the worship of Kuan Im into Theravada Buddhism was prominently seen in the activities of Luang Phor Khoon, who blessed icons and images associated with the Mahayana *bodhisattva* as readily as those from the

Theravada tradition. On the occasion of the annual Chinese vegetarian festival in October 1995, The Mall department store chain placed full-page advertisements in the Thai-language press to promote the sale of 1.2 × 1 metre colour posters of Confucius as a child paying ritual homage to Kuan Im.[16] The advertisement reproduced the poster, and at the bottom left included a photograph of Luang Phor Khoon squatting on his haunches and smoking a home-made cigar. Khoon had blessed the printing of this poster, with holy water consecrated at a blessing ceremony being used in the mixing of the inks in the printing process. This is a fascinating example of the interpenetration of Thai and Chinese religion in a commercial context, with a rural Theravada monk blessing a Chinese Mahayana *bodhisattva* as well as the founder of Confucianism at the request of a metropolitan department store chain. Purchasers of the poster produced by The Mall could obtain in one item multiple blessings from three religious traditions.

However, a series of 'lucky banknotes' apparently produced by people associated with Luang Phor Khoon provides the most stunning example of the co-location of elements of the complex of prosperity religions on a single devotional object (Figure 4). First produced in 1994 and based on colour copies of actual 100, 500, and 1,000 baht banknotes, the lucky banknotes combine symbols of protection against evil and victory over foes together with images and symbols of wealth. In recent years these lucky banknotes, selling for as little as 10 baht a piece, have come to be used widely by small traders as good luck talismans to increase business. Streetside vendors often display the Luang Phor Khoon lucky banknotes at the front of the wooden trestle tables on which they lay out their wares. Taxi drivers stick the lucky banknotes on their dashboards to attract customers, while also hanging Luang Phor Khoon amulets from their rear vision mirrors to protect them from accidents and injuries.

The use of spiritually symbolic 'money' in religious ritual is not unique to Thailand, with 'hell banknotes' being burnt in Chinese rituals as offerings to the spirits of the deceased, to be used in their supernatural realm. While Khoon's lucky banknotes may reflect this Chinese practice, his banknotes are not incinerated for the benefit of the dead but are preserved and displayed for the benefit of the living owner. The most fascinating feature of the Khoon lucky banknotes is the way they integrate spiritual and worldly symbolisms, with images of legal tender

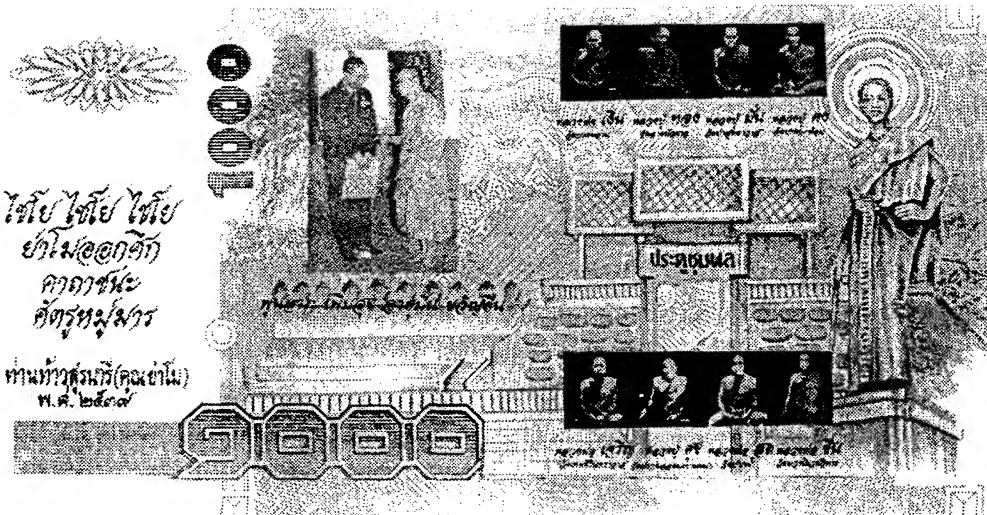[16] *Daily News*, 6 October 1995, p. 13.

Figure 4. Luang Phor Khoon lucky banknote, based on 1,000 baht banknote. The top picture is of the front of the note – the bottom shows the reverse side.

superimposed upon 'spiritual tender' in a mutual intensification of meanings. In the lucky banknotes, the import of spiritual symbolisms is heightened by their association with images of wealth, while images of cash are taken beyond their merely commercial significance as a medium of material exchange to represent a ritual exchange and an accumulation of the immaterial quality of religious merit.

Large black lettering on the front of these notes reads: 'Lucky banknote, Luang Phor Khoon, great fortune (*maha-lap*), receiving wealth', followed by a blessing from Khoon, 'Blessings, I want you to be rich'. The front of the lucky banknote also includes a picture of Rama V, plus an

image of Nang Kwak. The notes all bear the serial number 9X9999999, which, in addition to being the greatest possible numerical value, also has associations with the 'ninth reign' of King Bhumipol, Rama IX, and the auspicious properties of the number nine in Thai numerology. One reason for the auspiciousness of the number nine, *kao*, is that this word is a close homonym of the word for 'progress' or 'advance'. The letter 'x' in the serial number can be read both as a multiplication sign and as an indexical symbol of the name 'Khoon'. Khoon himself is pictured holding wads of banknotes in the place where King Bhumipol's image appears on Thai legal tender, with the words 'Multiplying wealth a hundred thousand million times'. On the area where a watermark is printed on real notes appears a mixed Pali-Thai verse called 'The mantra to call in money' (*khatha riak ngern*), which reads: 'The Buddha battles; the Dhamma battles; the *Sangha* overcomes the dangers that would destroy peace'. The *krut* (garuda), official symbol of the Thai government and bureaucracy which appears on legal tender, is replaced by Khmer or Khom magic letters inside a mystic symbol. The reverse of the note bears an image of Thao Suranaree, popularly called Ya Mo, a local heroine who has become a supernatural patron of Khoon's home province of Nakhonratchasima. The following incantation is printed with this auspicious image, 'Victory, Victory, Victory. Ya Mo goes out to battle. This is an incantation of victory over enemies and demons'. The reverse of the note also includes a photograph of King Bhumipol standing with Luang Phor Khoon at Wat Ban Rai, with the inscription, 'Increase good fortune, increase happiness, long life, fortitude'.

The many stories of Thailand's prosperity religions: economic, political, and cultural contexts

While the persistence of premodern animist practices and the existence of Theravada devotional cults of prosperity tell us that the 1990s prosperity movements were not completely novel phenomena, the mere existence of these precedents in Thai religious history and practice does not tell us why a formerly minor phenomenon should have suddenly become so prominent. The story of the rise of the prosperity movements involves a series of interconnecting narratives. The popularity of each of the movements focused on Rama V, Kuan Im, and magic monks, requires a separate account that relates their particular audiences or markets to the distinctive historical and cultural resonances of these figures. In the rise of the worship of Kuan Im we can read the story of

the further integration of Thailand's ethnic Chinese population into the country's political and cultural mainstream. In the popularity of magic monks such as Luang Phor Khoon we can see the aspirations of the rural and urban poor to participate in the wealth of 'globalizing' Thailand. And in the devotional movement centred on King Rama V we can detect anxieties about the future of the institution of the monarchy, as well as state attempts to harness the prosperity movements for nationalist and personal political purposes.

However, the overall phenomenon also requires a more general explanation that relates all of the movements to broader changes within the Thai religio-cultural domain. The various prosperity movements could not have become so prominent without a dramatic shift in the relations between state and religion in 1990s Thailand, which permitted nonpolitical influences to become the most important determinants of religious expression. I start with the story of the retreat of the Thai state from intervening in religion, and then consider the separate stories of the rise of the different prosperity movements in the newly depoliticized space of Thai religious culture.

The retreat of the state and the rise of the market in Thai religiosity

The rise of the prosperity movements as expressions of popular religiosity in the 1990s is closely related to the Thai state's retreat from its historical role of harnessing Buddhism for state purposes. For most of the twentieth century, Thai governments attempted to link Buddhism to the task of nation-building and state-guided socio-economic development, instituting a centralized model of Thai Buddhist religiosity and often suppressing regional and supernaturalist religious forms perceived as threatening to state objectives (see Jackson, 1988[b]). In contrast, from the late 1980s to the onset of the economic crisis in mid-1997 there was a rapid decline in Thai politicians' and bureaucrats' interest in controlling Buddhism, except to deal with more extreme cases of clerical corruption or immorality. In the context of his research on the appropriation and commodification of images of 'Thainess' (*khwam-pen-Thai*) in advertising, Patrick Jory (unpublished) has also observed that during the boom years, the state withdrew from its historical role of overseeing cultural production and played a much less influential role in the construction of images of national identity. This retreat of the state created a depoliticized space within which popular religious movements, which in earlier decades may have incited political intervention, were able to flourish.

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The retreat of the state from controlling Thai religion appears to have been influenced by several factors. From the late 1980s a series of widely publicized sex scandals and cases of clerical fraud and corruption rocked institutional Buddhism (see Jackson, 1997[b]; Keyes, unpublished [b]). Prominent monks such as Phra Nikorn in Chiang Mai and the internationally famous Acharn Yantra were exposed as having ongoing relationships with female followers and fathering children. In 1996 the formerly respected monk Phra Phawana Phuttho was defrocked after being charged with raping under-age Hill Tribe girls living at his Nakhornpathom monastery west of Bangkok. In the late 1980s another prominent monk was defrocked and jailed for selling royal awards and decorations to social climbing members of Bangkok's nouveau riche. The perceived inaction, even complicity, of senior echelons of the *sangha* administration in these and other highly publicized cases contributed to a rapid decline in the moral standing of state-sponsored institutionalized Buddhism, creating a widespread mood of disenchantment with establishment religion and undoubtedly contributing to the attractiveness of new movements seen as being untainted by the moral decline of the mainstream *sangha*.

The late 1980s also saw a democratic shift from military-dominated politics to multi-party governments under elected prime ministers, with the elected Chatichai Choonhavan replacing the appointed General Prem Tinsulanonda as premier in 1989. This democratic transition coincided with the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the boom of the Thai economy. After decades of culturally stultifying and often authoritarian military rule, a democratic political mood and an attitude of social and cultural openness came to dominate. In the mid-1990s, the country was 'relabelled' with an international marketing strategy adopting the catchphrase 'Dynamic Economy, Open Society', to promote the 'new Thailand' to investors, tourists, and the international media. Government intervention in religious affairs came to be seen as an anachronism in an increasingly democratic civil society. The coup of 1991 and the bloody military intervention in Bangkok in May 1992 were, in the last analysis, only minor hiccups in this process, with the trend towards political, social, and cultural openness accelerating after the departure in disgrace of the wannabe dictator General Suchinda Kraprayoon. Significantly, the decline in political control over religion occurred at the same time as the economic boom, with economic forces gathering strength at precisely the moment that political influences over religion and other aspects of cultural production waned. The growth of the economy created

an expanded space of cultural production that went beyond the historical scope of state-based authority, with the withdrawal of state power and the emergence of a dramatically enlarged market together creating a domain within which economic forces became the more important determinants of religious expression.

Beyond Weber: the enchanting spirit of Thai capitalism

While the creation of a depoliticized cultural-religious space was an essential precondition for the emergence of popularly based movements as the focus of much Thai religious life, the mere creation of this space did not determine the market-oriented form of the devotional movements that came to fill it. The existence of a booming economy is not, of itself, sufficient to account for the phenomenal popularity of the supernatural and often highly animist prosperity religions. As the market became a dominant force in determining expressions of popular religiosity in Thailand, it dramatically accentuated premodern beliefs and rituals, and overshadowed doctrinal forms of Buddhist religiosity. This resurgence of popular supernaturalism in the midst of the boom contradicts classical theories of the relationship between religion and capitalist development. As Keyes and others (1994:4) point out: .

Western theories of modernisation . . . presupposed the liberation of people from superstition and time-consuming and expensive rituals so that they could participate in a new rationalised order oriented toward the attainment of self-sustaining economic growth.

In his analysis of the history of American studies of Thai culture since the Second World War, Douglas Pressman summarizes the main tenets of modernization theory as follows:

Modernisation Theory held that for modernisation to take hold outside the West the overall Western experience with modernity would have to be duplicated . . . it substantially implied – just as Max Weber (and numerous others) had asserted regarding the rise of capitalism and science in the West – that religious conceptions of reality which Third World peoples clung to would have to be . . . superseded by more rational systems of belief and motivation. . . . [F]or Third World societies to become modern required that they voluntarily or forcibly leave their old cultural luggage on the threshold (Pressman, unpublished:4–6).

According to Pressman, modernization theory assumed that Asians' 'ancient cultural inheritance lacked the meanings they needed to make either practical or essential sense of their lives under the changed

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circumstances of industrialism and capitalist commercialism' (Pressman, unpublished:20).

Self-sustaining growth appeared to have been achieved in 1990s Thailand – but at the expense of religious rationalism. Instead of the triumph of Thai capitalism being associated with modernizing, rationalist cultural trends, its most iconic religious expression was a resurgent supernaturalism. The present study disproves the assumptions of modernization theory, and points to the considerable adaptability of popular religious culture in Thailand in its capacity to create meanings relevant to industrialism and commercial capitalism. The experience of the boom years shows that, far from being a brake on Thai economic development, popular religiosity could become an integral part of economic expansion. Instead of being undermined by capitalism, Thai ritual magic expanded in parallel with the booming market-place. Paradoxically, the type of religion which suffered most during the boom years was precisely that form which in earlier decades modernization theory assumed was the cultural prerequisite for Thai development, namely, a demythologized doctrinal Buddhism represented as being compatible with rationality and science.

Comaroff (1994:301) notes the inadequacy of older accounts of the religion/capitalism matrix, stating that the recent history of religion in capitalist East and South East Asia urges us to 'distrust disenchantment' and 'rethink the telos of development' that still informs much social science and equates socio-economic development with secularization and rationalization. Rapid capitalist growth in Thailand led neither to secularization nor to an increasing dominance of instrumental rational-.ity in the religious domain, but rather incited a spiritualization and enchantment of the market and capitalist enterprise. This situation is far from unique to Thailand. At a 1998 London conference on the relationship between religion and development hosted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, and President of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn, an unnamed World Bank official told the press, 'This is a post-Enlightenment world, not a post-religious one',[17] and added:

As governments have lost their legitimacy, so people have turned to faith and the social contract has been renegotiated. It is the religions which stand between the state and the market – both of which people don't fully trust . . . [religions provide] communities which are trusted, which link the macro and the micro. . . .

[17]   *The Canberra Times* (reprinted from *The Independent*), 7 March 1998, 'World Bank repents and turns to religion', p. C3.

Premodern-postmodern cultural convergence

Why should supernatural religion have proved so popular in an increasingly marketized world? Why was Thailand's new politics-free space for unencumbered cultural production filled with supernaturalist prosperity movements that glorified consumerism as holy, not with 'Protestant ethic' Buddhist movements emphasizing reason, order, and self-control as the basis of success? Thailand has no lack of such ascetic, doctrinalist Buddhist movements (for example Santi Asoke, see McCargo, 1993, 1997) or of doctrinalist philosopher monks (for example Buddhadasa, see Jackson, 1988[a]). In seeking to explain the continuing power of supernatural religious symbolisms in the 1990s Keyes and others have suggested that:

> Ritual and magical symbols continue to hold great appeal even in highly rationalized social orders because they and those who manipulate them offer the immediate eradication of injustice and imperfection through acts aimed at bringing the world into conformity with a cosmic order (Keyes and others, 1994:10).

However, I suspect that the above account is misguided in its assumption that 1990s Asian capitalisms provided instances of 'highly rationalized social orders'. I instead suggest that fundamental cultural similarities between pre-industrial and rapidly industrializing societies may explain the persistent popularity of supernaturalism. The complexities of globalization often appear supra-rational, and because of the limits of rational analysis to grasp what is happening in the contemporary world, there may be a convergence of outlooks which gives supernaturalism a continuing relevance in marketized societies.

The trinity of labels 'premodern', 'modern', and 'postmodern' represents a series of sociological distinctions and historical transitions which vary considerably from one society to another. While these terms cannot be taken as markers of a global or universal historical 'progression', they are nevertheless valuable as a typology of coexisting and competing cultural trends within both industrialized and industrializing societies. I suggest that in Thailand the largely but not exclusively village-based residue of pre-capitalist, pre-industrial culture can be called 'premodern', while the state-based project of national development involving centralized control over administration, culture, and the media represents a combination of policies and tendencies that is commonly associated with Thai 'modernity'. In contrast, the retreat of the state from directing cultural production, its replacement by the market, and the concomitant rise of the commodification of culture in the 1990s can be seen as

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representing the incursion of the 'postmodern' into contemporary Thai life. In 1990s Thailand, these various premodern, modern, and postmodern cultural trends coexisted in a highly fluid and agitated pattern of rela-- tions. I wish to argue that dominant features of Thai cultural history in the 1990s – in particular, the rapid increase in the popularity of the prosperity movements – emerged from a convergence of two of these trends, the premodern and the postmodern, and an overshadowing of the third, the modern.

One can detect a commonality between premodern and postmodern symbolic orders, in that both see the world as being beyond human beings' rational capacity to fully comprehend and control. For the premodern, events in the world are seen as being influenced by non-human and superhuman powers who can be placated and cajoled but never dominated. For the postmodern, the world is seen as hypercomplex, that is, beyond human analytical powers to fully analyse, predict, or control. Chaos theory and its 'butterfly effect' have become metaphors for postmodern social and economic life. To be fair to their study of religions in contemporary capitalist Asia, Keyes and others also provide an alternative account of the continuing relevance of supernaturalism in the 1990s, noting that there are limits to reason and that

the gap between the conclusions reached about the world through recourse to rational decision making and the practical reality of the world generates uncertainty and ambiguity that many seek to resolve through turning to religion (Keyes and others, 1994:15).

The sheer complexity of the social and cultural conditions engendered by contemporary forms of capitalism and communications technologies makes the limits of reason more apparent, and highlights how wide the gap is between rational analysis and 'the practical reality of the world', intensifying the experience of uncertainty and ambiguity. Therefore, we should not be surprised to find attempts in Thailand to provide a supernatural symbolic frame for the globalizing economy. Comaroff takes a post-rationalist stance in accounting for the rise of Asian prosperity religions:

Like ritual movements all over the late capitalist world, these cults address the impact of radically diffused and individuated production, of the insecurities of life in a capricious market where greed and luck appear as effective as work and rational choice. . . . [T]hese practices also promise the possibility of getting in on the act, of redirecting some of the largesse to those previously denied it (Comaroff, 1994:310).

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The Thai prosperity movements can be understood as pragmatic cultural forms for a society which had located the rationally intractable and theoretically recalcitrant globalized market at its heart. There is a reinforcing parallelism, rather than a contradiction, between a resurgent supernaturalism and a booming globalized economy. Resurgent Thai supernaturalism represented an attempt to clothe in symbolic order the hypercomplexity of the emerging marketized social formation. The prosperity movements sought to impose meaningfulness upon the disorienting dynamism of economic, political, and social life during the disruptions of the boom years, spiritualizing the market and symbolically taming the unruly power of globalizing capitalism. In this social formation 'reason' was often the stranger and the outsider, not the supernatural, and given the continuing uncertainties of Thailand's post-crash economy, there may yet be a place for the supernaturalist prosperity movements, even in a situation of severe recession and rapid wealth deflation.

The many stories of Thailand's prosperity religions: ethnicity, semiotics, and power

The retreat of the state, the marketization of social and cultural life, and the convergence of premodern and postmodern cultural trends set the overarching frame within which all the Thai prosperity religions emerged. However, these largely economically influenced transformations do not tell us why particular devotional movements should have grown up around certain monks, Kuan Im, or the spirit of King Rama V. Non-economic factors have also determined the precise forms taken by the individual movements, as well as their subsequent loose symbolic integration. A symbolic complex linking all these movements could have come into being only if the cultural and sociological barriers which historically distinguished Chinese and Thai religious symbologies had broken down. A particular regime of semiotic and discursive production capable of bringing together premodern and postmodern cultural trends was also required to effect the integration of symbolic elements from diverse traditions. And while the state may have largely withdrawn from the project of defining and directing cultural production, politicians and bureaucrats were not averse to appropriating elements of the popular movements for statist purposes or to promote individual political careers. Indeed, the rise of the movements and their loose integration required a certain complicity and tacit agreement by key political figures.

These three themes – (1) the integration of the Sino-Thai; (2) the persistence and intensification of a premodern symbolic logic; and (3) state appropriation and tacit support – can be found in the histories of all the movements: but each theme is more pronounced in some prosperity religions than in others. The integration of the Sino-Thai is a dominant theme in the worship of Kuan Im; the persistence of premodern symbolisms provides a key to understanding the popularity of prosperity monks such as Luang Phor Khoon; and state appropriation is a prominent narrative in the rise of the devotional movement surrounding the spirit of King Rama V. While these three narratives do not exhaust all the factors which contributed to the rise of the individual prosperity movements or their symbolic integration, they do provide insights into some of the most important ethnic, semiotic, and political factors that influenced cultural change in 1990s Thailand.

Kuan Im and integrating the Sino-Thai

The rise of the worship of Kuan Im among both Sino-Thais and ethnic Thais, and her integration into Theravada Buddhism, reflect a new openness to appropriating Chinese religious elements within Thai culture. The incorporation of Kuan Im into Thai religion also reflected a renewed self-confidence on the part of the Sino-Thai and pride in their Chinese cultural heritage. During the boom, the Sino-Thai no longer felt the need to de-emphasize their Chineseness when participating in Theravada rituals, feeling that they could be both Thai and true to their heritage by incorporating Chinese elements into their Theravada devotions. Kevin Hewison (1993), Kasian Tejapira (1997), Gary Hamilton and Tony Waters (1997), and Craig Reynolds (1998) have written of the new-found cultural confidence of Thailand's Chinese, and their central role in redefining what it means to be Thai in the 'era of globalization' (*yuk lokaphiwat*).

Chinese influences on Thai Buddhism are far from new, with Chinese architectural elements being found in a number of urban monasteries from the early Bangkok period, such as Wat Suthat. However, never before has a Chinese deity inhabited the ritual space of Thai monasteries, and the incorporation of the devotional cult of Kuan Im signifies an intensified relationship of Thai Buddhists with Chinese religion. This phenomenon is a cultural indicator of the further social and political integration of Thailand's ethnic Chinese population into narratives of 'Thainess'. The 1990s saw a more complete enmeshment of the Sino-Thai population into Thai political, cultural, and religious life, and the

blurring of the Thai/Chinese distinction in the formation of the amalgam that Nithi calls *jek* and Kasian calls *luk-jin* or urban Thai culture.

The appropriation of Chinese culture extends far beyond the incorporation of the worship of Kuan Im into Theravada devotions, for this religious phenomenon is merely the latest expression of the incremental Sinicization of Thai culture over the past century. Chinese (especially Tae Jiw dialect) words abound in modern Thai. Chinese dishes have become staples of Thai cuisine. Popular songs from Hong Kong and Taiwan are given Thai lyrics and become national hits. Hong Kong TV soap operas and movies are dubbed into Thai and become viewing favourites. Ritual products associated with all of the prosperity movements, including those of King Rama V and the prosperity monks, also reflect a strong Chinese aesthetic, with a preponderance of the colour red and a preference for Chinese-style Thai lettering.

The intensified openness to things Chinese on the part of ethnic Thais indicates that Chinese cultural elements are no longer perceived as foreign or threatening, as they often were in earlier decades in the twentieth century. This cultural and religious openness suggests that the Sino-Thai population had been sufficiently 'Siamized' that their economic prosperity during the boom years was able to be read as a Thai success story, not just the success of one ethnic sector of the population. The Sino-Thai population has long dominated the Thai economy (see Krirkkiat and Yoshihara, 1983; Akira, 1996) and was the dominant local force in the country's recent boom (see Pasuk and Baker, 1995). However, in a context where *jek/luk-jin* was equated with urban Thai, then *jek/luk-jin* economic success was read as Thai success, and *jek/luk-jin* culture became Thai culture, and a prestigious and admired part of Thai culture at that. For reasons such as these, large numbers of ethnic Thais had few qualms about incorporating Chinese elements into their devotional practice in the 1990s.

However, the integration of Kuan Im into Theravada religiosity was also facilitated by an indigenization of this originally Chinese figure. The worship of the Mahayana *bodhisattva* was not borrowed unchanged, but was resignified within Thai religious expectations in the process of her appropriation. Historically, Chinese religions of prosperity emphasized becoming rich by promoting one's business, and, as Nithi has observed, Kuan Im was first worshipped in Thailand as a goddess of commerce. In contrast, Thai prosperity religions have historically emphasized acquiring wealth through luck, such as by winning the lottery, rather than via enhanced commercial activity, and were also more

concerned with notions of invulnerability and spiritual protective power.

Nithi (1994) suggests that in being acculturated within a Thai religious frame, Kuan Im came to be linked with more typically Thai interests such as finding lucky lottery numbers and solving relationship problems. In her role as a granter of boons, this Siamized Kuan Im is commonly given a title accorded to other beneficent feminine beings within the Thai supernatural pantheon, *jao mae* or 'lordly mother', while in her role as an expounder of ethics to promote commerce she is given the title *phra mae*, 'reverend mother'. Nithi argues that Kuan Im has been incorporated within Thai supernaturalism in a hybridized form, and that many of the Chinese elements in contemporary Thai religion are a mere clothing which dress a persistent pattern of Thai supernatural beliefs. Hence the relative ease with which many Thais were able to incorporate this cult into their religious life. According to Nithi, 'at the most superficial level Kuan Im has become just another god or spirit (*phi*) within the Thai system of belief, which is able to increase the number of spirits and gods indefinitely' (Nithi, 1994:90).

However, it would be wrong to think that there are two parallel cults of Kuan Im in Thailand, a Sino-Thai cult of Kuan Im as goddess of commerce and a Thai cult of the *bodhisattva* as goddess of protection. There is a symbolic continuity between Chinese supernaturalism oriented towards improving business and Thai concerns with invulnerability and protection from evil and danger. Thai interest in invulnerability is related to the desire to ensure success in ventures characterized by risk and danger, which in the context of village life were historically seen in terms of the risk of physical harm from bellicose neighbours or invaders, or psychic harm from malevolent spiritual forces in the natural environment. However, for vast numbers of Thais in the 1990s, the main source of anxiety about danger and the main locus of risk taking was not a physical domain but the commercial space of the market-place. In this context, ethnic Thai and Sino-Thai alike were able to find solace in each other's historical forms of supernaturalism, as the marketized livelihoods of both groups made improving business and coping with the vicissitudes of the market common foci of concern. Ethnic Thais from the countryside have been as much a part of this marketization of everyday life as city-born Sino-Thais, hence the cross-ethnic cultural relevance of hybrid symbolisms deriving from both Thai and Chinese sources.

In this light, the protective and victorious symbolic aspects of the Luang Phor Khoon lucky banknotes described above can be read as referring to small traders' daily struggles to survive in the market-place

and taxi drivers' battles to make a living in the hostile environment of Bangkok's congested streets. Unlike some old-style amulets and charms, these lucky banknotes are not used to protect the body from physical risks in combat, but to enhance the owner's chances of commercial success and acquiring wealth in the unpredictable undertaking of commerce. In the 1990s, the market economy enveloped almost all sectors of the Thai population, rural as well as urban. Subsistence agrarian lifestyles all but disappeared and were replaced by wage labouring or commercial activities for almost the entire population (one sometimes gets the impression that the entire fleet of Bangkok taxis is driven by displaced rice farmers from the north-east). In this context, the market-place became the new field of battle, as well as the key site of potential victory. The victorious symbolism of Khoon's lucky banknotes reflects widespread understandings of the opportunities and risks of the market economy. At the beginning of the 1990s, the then Prime Minister, the late Chatichai Choonhavan, drew on the symbolisms of war and commerce in his much-publicized statement that he saw his government's goal as transforming mainland South East Asia from a Cold War battlefield to a market-place.

The boom years accelerated the dissolution of the divide between these two ethnic-cultural groups, indeed became a force for their further social and political integration. If the decade to 1997 comes to be remembered as a brief Thai golden age, then it must also be remembered as far more than a story of economic success. Thailand's prosperity was founded upon social stability, which to a significant extent emerged from the cultural and religious integration of the Thai and the Chinese under the integrating signifier of the market. The incorporation of the worship of Kuan Im into the symbolic complex of prosperity religions must therefore be seen as a factor that contributed to Thailand's recent success story, not as a mere by-product of minor consequence.

Magic monks and marketing a premodern religious logic

The apparently seamless integration of disparate cultural elements in the complex of prosperity religions was also facilitated by the persistence of an animist-magical symbolic regime. Thailand's predominantly rural-based premodern animist-magical cultural order was never destroyed or fully supplanted by rationalized cultural and intellectual forms. The country's socio-economic transformation and integration into global capitalist markets occurred so quickly that the 'primordial beliefs' of the majority of the population had no time to be swept aside. Even in

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the 1990s, 'rationalist' modern education had impacted significantly on only a relatively small section of the population. Thailand has been extremely slow to extend compulsory education beyond the primary level, and despite the rapid increase in national wealth during the boom, the majority of the country's population had still received only a primary or junior secondary education. This meant that a 'culture of reason' had not been established as the dominant mode of intellectual production across all sectors of the population. In the 1990s vast numbers of rural-born men and women with only a few years of basic schooling jumped from subsistence lifestyles to an urban market-centred way of life, as they provided the labour force for the accelerating engine of the national economy. In the process, premodern rural beliefs and ritual practices were immediately juxtaposed with, and grafted onto, a postmodern urban cultural context. In this there was something of an elision of reason, an unmediated cultural leap from pre-rationalized supernaturalism to post-rational hypercomplexity.

The prosperity movements drew upon a logic which sees spiritual power (*saksit*) and charisma (*barami*) being acquired, transferred, and accumulated through relationships of resemblance, similitude, and association. In *The order of things*, Foucault describes a similar logic as having underpinned medieval Western discourses:

Up to the end of the sixteenth century, resemblance played a constructive role in the knowledge of Western culture. It was resemblance that largely guided exegesis and the interpretation of texts; it was resemblance that organised the play of symbols, made possible knowledge of things visible and invisible, and controlled the art of representing them (Foucault, 1994:17).

Within Thai supernaturalism, a similarity of appearance, sound, or meaning between objects, symbols, or words is often taken as indicating a similarity of the spiritual power that they possess. By this cultural logic the fact that a monk reputed to possess supernatural abilities is named Khoon is taken to imply that his powers include the capacity to 'multiply'. In the early years of his devotional cult, Luang Phor Khoon was believed to possess the power to multiply spiritual qualities such as the merit (*bun*) that Thai Buddhists have traditionally sought from religious participation. However, in a period when wealth became the national obsession and when becoming rich was interpreted as relying upon fortune deriving from accumulated merit, then increasingly Khoon was believed capable of multiplying the personal wealth of the faithful. This is rendered explicit in the representations of the monk handling large

sums of money that occur on ritual objects associated with his move-
ment.

A second principle operative in Thai supernaturalist discourses and
ritual practice is that of association, whereby things that are not neces-
sarily similar are believed to transfer or accumulate sacral power by
virtue of a relationship of contiguity. For example, when an array of
sacred and empowered (*pluk sek*) images is placed in close proximity,
then the space within which they are co-located is believed to possess
an intensified power. This principle of association is linked with an ad-
ditive logic, that access to blessings and supernatural power is enhanced
the greater the number of empowered symbols and images that are co-
located within the space of a shrine or temple. It is the operation of the
semiotic principles of similarity and association and the logic of addi-
tion that makes shrines and altars in Thailand often appear so 'cluttered'
and 'busy' to Western observers, combining a seemingly eclectic array
of diverse deities and images. The design of the Luang Phor Khoon
lucky banknotes described above also emerges from the operation of
these same principles.

The limited penetration of a scientific culture of reason due to the
restricted availability of secondary and higher education contributed to
the persistence of a magical system of signification within 1990s Thai
popular culture. This in turn facilitated the integration of the various
prosperity religions into a symbolic complex, a phenomenon which was
especially visible in the design and marketing of ritual items associated
with the movements. Just as the premodern village and Bangkok's
postmodern globalized market-places can be seen as having been united
by similar anxieties about the unpredictability of life, so too were they
united by similar semiotic orders. Commercial design, advertising, and
marketing often follow principles very similar to the magical system of
signification. The symbolic effect of images from all the movements
being represented in products manufactured in the same format, and
then being displayed together on the same department store shelves,
reproduced in commercial space the eclectic co-location of statues,
amulets, and portraits found in Thai shrines. The animist-magic sym-
bolic principles of similarity and association were mirrored in the
commercial imperatives of mass production and mass marketing, with
a continuity between the principles that guided supernaturalist symbolic
production and those that came to guide product design and retailing in
the market-place. Thai capitalism thus reinforced and even intensified
premodern cultural patterns, and the existence of a common animist-

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capitalist symbolic order helps us understand further why supernaturalism should have become a more prominent religious form in the era of globalization and the market economy.

The premodern pedigrees of Thai postmodernity

It might be argued that the symbolic complex of prosperity religions and their ritual products are examples of postmodern cultural hybridity (see Werbner and Modood, 1997), providing Thai instances of the aesthetic eclecticism which has become the dominant mode of cultural production in all contemporary capitalist societies, including the West. However, such a view risks being Eurocentric, reducing 1990s Thai culture to a product of forces seen as emanating from the West and overlooking the local and archaic features of the symbolic complex. From a Western perspective, the prosperity movements may appear to be an example of a culturally hybrid postmodern phenomenon now common across the global market-place. However, from a Thai perspective they are more likely to be seen as a pre-rational resurgence, a supernaturalist atavism that harks back to the religious syncretism of ancient Siam. This is indeed the view of doctrinalist Thai Buddhists, whose critiques of the prosperity religions as 'commercialized Buddhism' are considered below.

I do not wish to argue the obvious point that the symbolic elements of the 1990s prosperity religions had ancient genealogies. Rather, I contend that the logic that brought these movements together into a loose symbolic complex was also ancient, and did not come into being merely as a consequence of globalizing capitalism. Thailand did not need to acquire a Western-derived postindustrial discursive or semiotic logic in order to exhibit religious and cultural hybridity. The boom-time expressions of religious syncretism emerged from a long-standing cultural logic which was overlain and accentuated by a remarkably similar postmodern order of cultural production. At one and the same time, the ritual objects of the movements were products of the contemporary cultural logic of capitalism and expressions of an ancient, never-supplanted Thai supernatural cultural order.

In many ways the persistent premodern animism of the prosperity religions constituted them as already being postmodern, permitting them to be used to bless the boom-time economy despite their folk origins. Because they responded to similar anxieties about the unpredictability of life and their symbolic expressions were guided by similar processes of semiotic production, Thai premodernity and postmodernity may have

been experienced as a seamless cultural phenomenon despite their radically different histories. In this context, Marshal McLuhan's (1967) 1960s notion of the 'global village' takes on a new resonance, for in the 1990s the religio-symbolic culture of the Siamese village was preserved at the heart of urban Thailand's globalizing culture. In Thailand, the premodern and the postmodern began to converge in a single mode of cultural production. In this light, the critiques of the prosperity religions launched by Buddhist doctrinalists and members of the educated élites can be seen as rearguard attempts to 'rescue' Thai culture from this supernaturalist symbolic logic and to insist that contemporary social and cultural forms be interpreted and represented in rationalized and scientific terms.

State appropriation of the prosperity religions

The symbolic complex of prosperity religions reached the apogee of its mass popularity in the final years of the boom, by which time the movements were being increasingly appropriated by the state and integrated with aspects of officially supported religiosity. I have elsewhere (Jackson, 1999) described how politicians, former prime ministers (Chatichai Choonhavan, Chavalit Yongchaiyudh), senior civilian bureaucrats, the Royal Thai Army, the police, and the royal family all publicly participated in the movement surrounding Luang Phor Khoon. An example of the state appropriation of this movement, and the symbolic complex in general, is found in a handicrafts centre built with money donated by Luang Phor Khoon in the middle of Nakhonratchasima city, two hundred kilometres north-east of Bangkok. The two-storey centre, prominently labelled the 'Luang Phor Khoon Parisuttho Building', is built on state-owned land immediately in front of the provincial offices and court buildings. Opened in 1997, the fiftieth anniversary of King Bhumipol's accession to the throne, the building also displays the official symbol of the King's golden jubilee. The building was constructed to provide a sales outlet for local handicrafts in order to promote village economies, and the handicrafts centre and attached cafeteria are staffed by members of the provincial Community Development Organization (*ongkan phatthana chum-chon*), a network supported by the Interior Ministry to promote cottage industries.

This centre demonstrates the extent to which the charismatic figure of Luang Phor Khoon has been integrated into the state administrative apparatus of Nakhonratchasima Province, having become an icon of the province as well as an important benefactor of public welfare projects

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in the region. All of Khoon's welfare projects have been undertaken under the aegis of state instrumentalities, and once constructed have become the responsibility of the state to administer. For example, the 400 million baht Luang Phor Khoon Parisuttho Technical College in the monk's home district of Dan Khun Thot (nearing completion when I visited in August 1998) is administered by the Rajabhat Institutes under the Ministry of Education. Under the supervision of the National Highways Department, Khoon has funded construction of a bridge to facilitate road transport from neighbouring Chaiyaphum province to Nakhonratchasima,[18] while the handicrafts centre is administered by the Interior Ministry.

An entire upstairs section of the Nakhonratchasima handicrafts centre is devoted to selling Luang Phor Khoon amulets, holy cloths (*pha yan*), and framed photographs. A sign behind the counter reassures customers that all items are genuine products blessed by Luang Phor Khoon, who has given his permission for the centre to act as an approved sales outlet for his products. Significantly, in this same section of the centre one can also buy items bearing images of all the key figures of the symbolic complex, namely: Khoon and other prosperity monks; King Rama V; Kuan Im; and King Bhumipol and the royal family. This handicrafts centre is an example of a state instrumentality providing government land as a site for the sale of devotional objects for the entire panoply of prosperity religions.

The proto-cult of King Rama IX: the monarchy as symbolic heart of the prosperity religions

While instances of state appropriation of the symbolic complex within government buildings and their environs are common, the most ubiquitous demonstration of the incorporation of the complex within state-sponsored religiosity is the association of images of King Bhumipol and the royal family with the prosperity movements. The King is most commonly linked symbolically with the worship of his ancestor, King Rama V, but is also often found in association with prosperity monks such as Luang Phor Khoon (see, for example, Figures 5 and 6). The recent installation of a statue of Kuan Im in the country's most important royal monastery, Wat Bowornniwet, also provides a link between the monarchy and this originally Chinese form of devotion.

[18] A cynic could perhaps contend that construction of this bridge has facilitated travel from Chaiyaphum Province to Khoon's remote monastery, and thereby increased donations to Wat Ban Rai by increasing the number of visiting pilgrims.

Figure 5. New Year greeting card with King Bhumipol in the presence of Luang Phor Khoon.

In the years immediately preceding the crash of 1997, it was common to see an image of the King or the royal family installed beside images of Kuan Im, Rama V, or Luang Phor Khoon on altars in shops, offices, and homes. The image of King Rama IX was also integrated into the design of devotional products. In late 1997 the Art Media Company produced a New Year greeting card whose design superimposed portraits of King Chulalongkorn and King Bhumipol inside a gold-coloured design which included the royal insignia of these two monarchs. The

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Figure 6. New Year greeting card with image of King Bhumipol as a model rice farmer watched over by the spirit of King Chulalongkorn (Rama V).

most interesting feature of this card is the English-language inscription on the back, which reads, 'King Rama 5 and 9 live on among their subjects'. Minor errors in this text suggest caution in making too literal a reading. It is unlikely that the author wished to imply that King Bhumipol might no longer be among the living when he/she wrote that the present King and King Chulalongkorn 'live on among their subjects'. Nevertheless, it is clear that he/she intended to integrate the living Rama IX and the spirit of Rama V as dual guiding forces of the Thai people. In

this type of product, one can not only detect resonances of the Brahmanical *deva-raja* or 'god-king' cult that has surrounded the institution of the monarchy since the Ayutthaya period but also signs of a proto-cult of the individual monarch Rama IX. The commonness of visual and textual representations of a relationship between the 'living spirit' of Rama V and the present monarch suggest that Rama IX may be destined for posthumous apotheosis and a degree of devotional popularity perhaps on a par with that of his illustrious ancestor.

As King Bhumipol becomes older and the issue of the succession becomes more pressing, then his image has been increasingly sacralized, to become an integral part of the symbolic complex of prosperity religions. While the market provided the structural core and referential frame of all the movements, from the middle of the 1990s the image of Rama IX came to act as an integrating stylistic element in the design and display of ritual products. In the final years of the boom, the focal point of the symbolic complex became the semi-divine personage of Bhumipol Adulyadej, with the image of the King, and more generally the institution of the monarchy, functioning as the solar pivot around which the diverse planetary elements of the complex revolved. While not having explicit royal support, the symbolic placement of the monarchy at the heart of the complex was nevertheless not criticized by the palace. Indeed, the absence of public criticism of the monarchy's incorporation within the symbolism of the prosperity movements can be read as an expression of tacit support by the royal family.

However, the integration of the monarchy into the symbolic complex failed to mask widespread anxieties about the future of the institution. The image of Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn, the man legally next in line to the throne, is pointedly absent from the greeting cards, icons, and other products of the prosperity religions. While images of the King, his late mother, and his daughter, Princess Sirinthorn, abound in association with the supernatural figures of the prosperity movements, Prince Vajiralongkorn is almost nowhere to be seen, making only rare appearances in group portraits of the entire royal family. This telling visual absence reflects the Prince's unpopularity with many sections of the Thai populace. The contrasting prominence of Princess Sirinthorn in the royalist symbolism of the prosperity movements further reflects popular anxieties about the monarchy that cannot be discussed openly.[19]

9   The concerns surrounding the issue of the succession and the future of Princess Sirinthorn are often expressed in symbolic form rather than in the more dangerous medium of public discourse. In August 1997 I came across a large oil portrait of

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Intimations of a post-Buddhist Thailand: bolstering the state and the monarchy

The popularity of the symbolic complex suggests the existence in boom-time Thailand of a social formation in which a centrally defined expression of religiosity as a focus of national identity – one of Thai Buddhism's key roles since the nineteenth century – was no longer essential. In the 1990s the common experiences of participation in the market economy and ritual participation in the prosperity movements came to unite Thais more than nationalist rhetoric of a unique Thai Buddhist cultural identity. As Comaroff has observed, notions of national identity became less important in some, but by no means all, Asian societies during the boom years. What is '[m]ore constitutive of the uniqueness of modern communities . . . [is] their participation . . . in a global order of commodity production, transaction, and consumption' (Comaroff, 1994:305). The capacity of the mass-based prosperity religions to supplant the historically dominant nationalist religion indicates the extent to which capitalism and the market provided the political and symbolic bases of the unity of the Thai social formation during the boom years. When all had a common interest in getting in on the boom, and had at least the hope of improving their material circumstances, there was less need for the state to impose a non-economic religious ideology as a focus of social cohesion.

Princess Sirinthorn hanging in the restaurant of a guest house located off Rama IV Road in Bangkok's Sathorn district. In this large painting, the Princess's head was surrounded by a halo, and the background consisted of an array of ancient Buddha images and representations of old monasteries. With her halo and in the company of images of the Buddha, the Princess was perhaps being portrayed as a world-renouncing saint (she is unmarried). More likely, perhaps, the painting was intended to represent the Crown Princess as a *cakkavattin* monarch, the Buddhist ideal of righteous leadership (see Tambiah, 1976). The owner of the guest house and the painting was suspicious of my interest in the portrait, and provided only cryptic replies to my questions. He declined to give me permission to photograph the painting, indicating the sensitivity of the issues that it represented in visual form. However, he did reveal that the unsigned painting was the joint work of five artists who wished to remain anonymous. He also repeated several times that the painting was unfinished and would never be finished. I took this to mean that the painting represented the Princess as future monarch of Thailand, and that it would be finished only if she became queen. Article 23 of the new Thai constitution, which passed into law in 1997, does allow for the King's daughter to succeed him on the throne. However, given that it is unlikely that this would actually happen, the painting of her as queen could never be finished – its incomplete state signifying the perhaps impossible aspirations of many Thai people for this highly popular woman to succeed her father.

In this context, nationalist political rhetoric began to wither, and with it the associated symbology of Buddhism as the national religion. However, this de-centring of Buddhism took place at the level of ritual practice not within official discourses, where it remained as central as ever to notions of Thainess. In my research on the history of Thai discourses of sexuality (see Jackson, 1995, 1997[a]; Jackson and Sullivan, 1999), I have argued that within Thai culture, discourses of eroticism are often more tightly monitored and controlled than sexual practices. A similar situation obtains in the domain of religion. While large sections of the population fervently embraced non-Buddhist prosperity movements during the boom years, platitudes of Thailand being a 'Buddhist kingdom' continued to be produced in official discourses, tourist promotional literature, and media representations of the country.[20] Within the Thai social formation it is imperative that respected images (*phap-phot*) be upheld within discourse, even if in practice they are overshadowed or even ignored.

This culture of respecting public images meant that despite their prominence, the amalgam of prosperity religions could never be formally pronounced as part of the national religion. To recognize the incorporation of the prosperity religions within official religiosity would have been to announce that Buddhism, the spiritual focus of the monarchy and the Thai state, had been de-centred. The focal place of Buddhism in all contemporary discourses of national and cultural identity provided a discursive barrier to acknowledging formally that the complex of prosperity religions had effectively displaced Buddhism from its pedestal at the heart of images of Thainess. To give a name to this *de facto* situation would have been to acknowledge that the market had become the core of Thai religiosity, and that Buddhism was now arrayed around this focus as one religio-symbolic form beside alternative royalist and Chinese symbologies. While during the boom years Thai of all social strata – including the royal family, and military and government officials – engaged publicly in Chinese ritual, a revivified Brahmanical god-king cult, and supernatural and unorthodox forms of Buddhism, it was still too threatening for the official image of Thailand as an ostensibly

[20]   In this context, Keyes' 1989 book, *Thailand: Buddhist kingdom as modern nation-state*, reflects dominant discourses of the Buddhism-society relationship more than the dominant forms of popular devotional practice. More recently Keyes (unpublished [a]) has discussed the 'fragmentation' of Thai Buddhism since the 1970s. However, this analysis of the socio-political placement of religion in Thailand remains Buddhist-centric, and does not give sufficient attention to the importance of non-Theravada religiosity at all levels of social, political, and cultural life.

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Theravada Buddhist nation to be challenged. The practical de-centring of Buddhism within boom-time religiosity had the potential to undermine the historical relationship between religion and political authority in Thailand, and in this one can see the seeds of the strong reassertion of doctrinal Buddhism as the core of Thai religiosity and cultural identity that has been mounted by critical intellectuals in the aftermath of the recent economic crash.

The active interest of many key players within state institutions in the prosperity religions indicates that, even with the withdrawal of the state from controlling cultural production, in the 1990s there was still considerable value in preserving a symbolic relationship between political authority and religion, as well as strong resistance to a complete secularizing of public images and discursive representations of the Thai polity and national identity. However, during the boom years, state-sponsored forms of Buddhism proved incapable of sustaining these historical relationships of religion and political power. The state may have retreated from its historical role of remoulding the Buddhist *sangha* in its own changing image, and it may have ceased manufacturing its own sources of religious charisma, as King Mongkut, Rama IV, did in the nineteenth century when he established and nurtured the Thammayut reform movement. However, in the 1990s, politicians and state institutions perpetuated the symbolic relationship of religion and politics, and enhanced their charisma, by appropriating popular religious movements. At a time when statist versions of Buddhist symbolism and teachings had lost their capacity to provide a unifying focus of nationalist sentiment, the symbolic complex brought together popular aspirations for wealth with state interests in enhancing the charisma of political institutions and in controlling an increasingly mobile, dislocated, and potentially unruly workforce. The complex of prosperity religions provided a ready-made symbolic framework for these tasks, ideally suited to bolstering established power hierarchies and the interests of political and economic élites in the midst of the rapid transformations of the boom.

The assimilative propensities of Thai supernaturalism make it culturally integrative and non-exclusionary, as demonstrated by the way in which the symbolic complex was able to bring together rural and urban labourers, Chinese business interests, the civilian bureaucracy, the police, the armed forces, and even the monarchy. In a period of social dislocation the complex of prosperity movements provided an integrative religio-cultural frame that symbolically smoothed over, but in no sense eradicated, the political contradictions and economic disparities of the

boom years. Furthermore, nationwide marketing and reporting in the press and media projected the prosperity religions into media-scapes and commercial spaces across the country. By the mid-1990s, the omnipresent market had been sacralized, pervaded nationally by a common set of highly visible religious symbols accessible in every market-place, department store, news-stand, and bookshop in the country.

By associating the image of the monarchy with the symbolic complex, the originally populist and market-determined prosperity religions could be harnessed for a variety of state purposes. For example, by this association the charisma of the monarchy was further intensified, as the already semi-divine institution received an additional significant boost as a symbol of prosperity. Through the worship of Rama V, and the emerging proto-cult of Rama IX, the Thai monarchy achieved an even more prominent position in cultural and religious life during the boom years, drawing an intensified charismatic charge from its association with the prosperity religions. In the 1990s, the archaic Brahmanical sacralization of Thai kingship achieved an almost unprecedented status by being conflated with the fetishization of money and the commodity. This linking of the monarchy with the prosperity movements drew almost all sectors of the Thai polity together under the dual images of the divinized Rama V and the living Rama IX, resuscitating a symbol of the political apogee of the modernizing absolutist state and creating a new legitimating symbolism based on the spiritualization of wealth for both the monarchy and the state.

Thailand's national religion of prosperity

The persistence of ancient symbolic systems and their capacity to be given new meanings permitted the prosperity movements to be linked with nationalist narratives of Thai development, growth, and cultural pride, narratives which in earlier decades had been related to state-sponsored Buddhism. As religious expressions of the boom, the new movements were subsequently resignified in conservative royalist terms, and in this form they were taken into the heart of the Thai state, providing politicians, the army, the civilian bureaucracy, and the monarchy with a symbolic link to the burgeoning economic activity which, while controlled by Sino-Thai business groups, also became the focus of the lives of most Thai men and women whatever their ethnic or class background. By the time of the onset of the crash in July 1997, the prosperity movements had come to link 'the (ethnic) Thai people', Sino-Thai business interests, and the state under the comforting symbolic roof of royal

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spirits, Chinese gods, and magic monks, becoming religio-political symbols of a Thailand united in a common quest for national self transformation through global enmeshment, productive activity, and wealth creation.

The prosperity religions and their symbolic complex therefore represent much more than a bunch of eccentric religious movements. For a few years in the middle of the 1990s these movements brought together popular aspirations for a better life with nationalist narratives of Thailand taking its 'proper place' in the world, and of some day soon becoming a 'developed country'. At the height of the boom they became symbols of national unity in which many sectors of the population – ethnic Thai labourers, Sino-Thai business people, politicians, bureaucrats, the monarchy – imagined themselves working to become rich together, proud of their country's seemingly unstoppable march to globally recognized developed status.

Epilogue: a fragile synthesis?

Economic crash, resurgent doctrinalism, and Thailand's culture war

So long as the majority of the population appeared to be preoccupied with making money in the frenzied gold rush mentality that dominated Thailand for the decade until July 1997, there was little need for the state to impose centrist images of Thai identity. When the economic and political power élites and most ordinary individuals subscribed to the same ideology of making money, then the state could loosen its formerly tight grip over cultural production and constructions of national identity. This does not mean that this period was marked by complete social harmony or an absence of anxieties about social disorder, environmental collapse, or cultural loss. Far from it: all these issues were persistent matters of public concern and debate throughout the boom years. However, they were not powerful enough to counter the prevalent mood of boom euphoria within which the state retreated from the cultural domain. To a large extent the creation of a new symbolic order for globalizing Thailand was left to a group of popular religious movements and their capitalist supporters who churned out spiritualized images of conspicuous consumption in the Thai garden of wealth and worldly delights. But for the moment the money has dried up and the gold fever has been replaced by an anxious national self reflection focused on seeking

answers to the question – 'Where did we go wrong?' If social conditions are indeed productive of cultural forms, then the cultural expressions of the boom years are unlikely to remain unchanged in a period of recession, deflation, and rising unemployment.

But precisely how the current economic downturn will impact on the symbolic complex is not yet clear. Are the prosperity religions fragile or resilient cultural forms? Are they only sustainable as mass movements so long as the majority of people have at least the hope of being included within the expanding circuits of wealth-creating economic exchange? Or are these movements on a path towards becoming integral parts of establishment forms of Thai religiosity? When growth turns to contraction, and competition for limited resources returns as the historical pattern of social and economic life, will there also be a return to older, politicized forms of religious justification of the exploitation of the many by the few? Or will the downturn see an efflorescence of doctrinalist Buddhism as part of a perceived need to make politico-economic processes more transparent and less subject to abuse? The answers to these questions are not yet clear. However, in the period following the floating of the baht and the onset of the financial crisis, a renewed and intensified competition between doctrinalist and supernatural forms of Thai Buddhism has emerged.

This paper has told some of the stories of those, the majority of the Thai population, who participated in the prosperity religions during the boom. It has also hinted at the stories of the sometimes vocal minorities who, throughout the same period, persistently denounced the movements as irrational, superstitious, and commercialized corruptions of what they see as 'true Buddhism'. Variously called doctrinalists or reformists, the critics of the prosperity religions can also be called fundamentalists in the sense defined by Keyes and others: 'Fundamentalists point to an authority found in scriptures in order to undermine religious pluralism . . .' (Keyes and others, 1994:12).

Modernity is often seen as a project of oneness, based on faith that there is one truth, one source of political authority, one religious centre, one national identity. A doctrinal understanding of Buddhism has underpinned the Thai project of modernity, and religious doctrinalists have privileged literate forms of knowledge. For them, an emphasis on Buddhist scripture (*khamphi, phra tham*) has been a way of attempting to anchor religious meaning and expression. Thai doctrinalists define their religion in terms of the Buddhist canon and evaluate people's religious practice and belief by the extent to which they adhere to principles set

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down in the written word of the scriptures. However, the prosperity movements are not 'literate' phenomena. Their religiosity is more a matter of ritual and symbol than of doctrine. There is no 'keeper of the book' to regulate their practice. In the prosperity movements, words function more as mystic symbols – mantras (Thai, *khatha*), *yantras* (Thai, *pha yan*), tattoos (Thai, *roi sak*) – than as representations of rationally accessible meanings.[21] Through relations of resemblance, similitude, and association, the meanings of the symbols linked with the movements proliferate beyond the power of any individual or institutional authority to limit or define. This decentralization of meaning can be seen as a Thai instance of the postmodern condition, in which faith in the unity of knowledge, power, and being is abandoned. This epistemic situation in turn reflected Thailand's marketized social formation, in which the sources of popular religious devotion multiplied, political power was divided up amongst several major players, and notions of national identity also began to fragment.

The doctrinalist views of Buddhist critics often lead them to dismiss supernaturalist folk beliefs as not being a genuine form of Thai Buddhist culture. In 1994, Amnuay Suwankhiri, a Democrat Party MP and former Chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Religious Affairs, publicly criticized the 'fallacious religious beliefs' of national leaders who followed supernaturalist monks such as Luang Phor Khoon.[22] At the same time, Phra Panyananda, a well-known clerical follower of the prominent doctrinalist philosopher monk Buddhadasa, told the press:

> Politicians who pay regular visits to popular monks for mystical purposes are spiritually weak and lack proper understanding of Buddhism. All the monks who practise magic [*saiyasat*] are idiots. So are the politicians who visit them.[23]

While such critiques appeared periodically in the highbrow Thai- and English-language press in the decade leading up to July 1997, for the most part the dissenting voices of the Buddhist fundamentalists were all but drowned out by the sheer volume of affirmative cultural noise that surrounded the prosperity religions. However, the past couple of years have seen the volume of doctrinalist criticisms in the press and other venues increase, and begin to challenge the supporters of the prosperity

[21] Thanks to Patrick Jory for observations on the non-literate character of the prosperity religions.

[22] *The Nation*, 10 March 1994, 'Politicians warned credibility at stake', p. A2.

[23] *The Nation*, 10 March 1994, 'Superstitious politicians and monks taken to task', p. A2.

movements. The following mid-1998 editorial from *The Nation* news-
paper, entitled 'Buddhism is not about materialism', reflects the
prominence now being given to critiques of supernatural 'commercial-
ized' religion:

> In recent times Thai Buddhists have spoiled monks by bestowing on them material
> comforts and considerable riches in the form of cash and assets donated to
> temples. And as these temples have gained enormous wealth, it stands to rea-
> son that some enterprising lay people will seek to profiteer from it. Many abbots
> and monastic chiefs are known to compete among themselves for personal pres-
> tige, which is usually measured by the lavishness and the size of chanting halls
> built with money solicited from Buddhists. All this outward pursuit of materi-
> alism is condoned by the public at the expense of Buddhism as an institution.
> During the economic boom, such vain pursuits – which are supposed to be
> serious vices under Buddhist precepts – were tolerated and even encouraged by
> the public. [24]

In July 1998, the well-known *Bangkok Post* columnist and social com-
mentator Sanitsuda Ekachai denounced entrepreneurial monks who
promoted the commercialization of Buddhism as 'the enemy within',
satirizing their devotional products as 'gimmicks' deserving of a 'mar-
keting award from the Temple Vultures Association' and decrying 'how
crazy things can be when religious authorities cannot control the com-
mercialization of Buddhism'.[25]

These and similar critiques have revealed the outlines of a post-crash
Thai culture war between competing religio-symbolic visions of the
country's future. The two sides of the culture war are marked, among
other ways, by radically differing understandings of the term *saiyasat*.
For many supporters of the prosperity movements, *saiyasat* is seen in
positive terms as an apt description of their religiosity, understanding
this term to mean 'spiritualism' or a means of accessing supernatural
power, and seeing their ritual practices as ancient and legitimate parts
of Thai culture. In contrast, for doctrinalist Buddhists, *saiyasat* is a deroga-
tory term of abuse, variously glossed in English as 'superstition' or 'black
magic', and signifying all that they despise in both traditional and con-
temporary forms of Thai poly-religious syncretism.

The symbolic 'Siamization' of Thai capitalism

Lay and clerical intellectual critics in Thailand such as Sulak Sivaraksa,

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[24]   *The Nation*, 25 June 1998, Editorial: 'Buddhism is not about materialism', p. A4.
[25]   *Bangkok Post* (Internet – www.bangkokpost.net), 16 July 1998, 'Commentary: monks
are the enemy within', by Sanitsuda Ekachai.

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Sanitsuda Ekachai, Dr Prawet Wasi, and Phra Dhammapidok (1997) have denounced the 'destruction of Thai culture' and the 'loss of Thai Buddhist values' that they see as having accompanied the boom and as having contributed to the economic crash. In July 1998, Suthichai Yoon, editor of *The Nation*, wrote:

We need to go back to our societal basics . . . we must regain control of our own social direction after having lost to greed and excesses in the name of economic pursuit . . . nobody was quite ready to admit that the unsupportable economic boom at the time was tearing the social fabric apart – that we had lost our soul in our vain attempt to become an 'economic tiger' . . . one might even be tempted to conclude that the declining social values (the Thai version of corruption, cronyism and nepotism) had in fact precipitated the economic crisis. Not the other way round.[26]

The views of these critics in large measure reflect mid-twentieth century Western concerns about whether 'traditional' cultures were capable of modernizing. As Pressman states:

A good part of the drama of mid-century scholarly commentary on Thailand derived from its open wondering whether people who behave like Buddhists, and think like Thai, would ever be capable of running efficient factories and a substantively democratic state. Conversely, various scholars . . . fretted in print over whether the seemingly unstoppable imposition of modern institutions on such a people might not throw their internal cultural compasses pathologically out of kilter, making them the inhabitants of a normless wasteland (Pressman, unpublished:61–62).

Yet despite earlier Western and contemporary Thai concerns about the 'cultural loss' that it was thought modernization would inflict, we now know that a significant amount of 'Thai culture' was not only preserved but given new meaning by the marketization of social life. In the midst of the breakneck pace of social and economic change, ancient ideas and symbols were not only preserved but integrated into the new social formation in an apparently seamless way. Given the international cultural dominance of the West, it is perhaps remarkable that the Thai retained so much of their culture in the face of globalizing influences. Rather than undermining all Thai cultural values, the boom years revived an array of premodern religious symbols as integral parts of the capitalist enterprise.

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[26] *The Nation* (Internet edition – www.nationgroup.com), 28 July 1998, Editorial by Suthichai Yoon, 'Thai talk: Prawase's battle cry for social reform'.

While Buddhist doctrinalists call for the preservation of Thai culture in the face of materialism, consumerism, and globalization, they are in fact engaged in a battle to eradicate much of what many Thai, especially the lesser educated, understand as essential aspects of their religious culture. An important sociological consequence of the rise of the prosperity movements is that they permitted capitalism and socio-economic development to be perceived as indigenous phenomena. The adaptable multiform character of the symbolic amalgam that constitutes Thai religion meant that the Thai had little need to look to the West for new religious forms that would be seen as relevant to the changing social and economic situation. While many areas of Thai cultural life were indeed Westernized during the boom, at least superficially in terms of aesthetics and style, religion drew almost exclusively from premodern Thai and Chinese symbolisms. These local religious forms proved eminently capable of being integrated into the new economically based power structures. Doctrinalist Buddhist critics contend that the prosperity movements represent the power of capitalism to co-opt and debase Thai culture and are to be vehemently resisted. However, these movements also represent the converse of this, namely, the plasticity of Thai cultural forms and their capacity to incorporate new ways of living and working, including those centred on the market.

It is perhaps easy for academics, both Thai and Western, either to criticize or smile condescendingly at the supernatural beliefs and kitsch aesthetic of the Thai prosperity movements. Yet there is much to admire in these religious phenomena. Rather than being a singularly negative development, the new movements can be seen as having played a constructive role during the 'anything goes' days of the boom, with the resymbolization of the market meaning that the dramatic changes of the 1990s could be read as a Thai phenomenon rather than as a foreign incursion. As a symbolic Siamization of Thai capitalism, the prosperity movements facilitated Thailand's socio-economic transformation by avoiding labelling the disruptive consequences of the boom as foreign, a divisive situation which emerged in some other South East Asian societies undergoing rapid global enmeshment and which provoked anti-Western reactions. In neighbouring Malaysia, the 1990s globalizing boom provoked identity anxieties among sections of the ruling Malay élite and saw the further rise of anti-Western rhetoric and Islamic fundamentalism. Thailand's doctrinalist Buddhists can be compared to Malaysia's Islamic fundamentalists, in that both groups

saw rapid growth in the 1990s as challenging the historically domi-
nant images of national identity and religio-cultural integrity of their
respective societies.

While Thai Buddhist doctrinalists saw the boom years as a period of
cultural threat, for the majority of the population the 'foreign' economic
form of globalizing capitalism was re-dressed in the comforting images
of saffron-robed grandfatherly monks, a revered monarch, and a merci-
ful Chinese mother figure, permitting and inciting an active lust for
global engagement and national transformation rather than provoking
resistance. While a doctrinalist minority saw the market as undermin-
ing Thai Buddhism, for the majority of the population, Thai religion, in
the form of the prosperity movements, continued to fulfil its historical
roles of providing a focus of popular sentiment, a source of cultural
identity, and a means of participating in socially cohesive collective
ritual.

However, the socially integrative role of the prosperity movements
does not mean that they were politically progressive forces. As Comaroff
observes:

The meaning of such innovative movements is complex. . . . They do not reduce,
in unidimensional terms, to the zero-sum logic of 'conservatism' or 'resist-
ance', although they probably entail elements of both. They are imaginative
efforts to reclaim a runaway world, to make history with a recognisable face
(Comaroff, 1994:310).

As cultural sources of social stability, the Thai prosperity movements
were by and large politically conservative. They proved eminently capable
of being appropriated by conservative political groups, and this align-
ment of Thai supernaturalism with often corrupt politicians underpins
many doctrinalist Buddhist critiques. In the context of government at-
tempts to force monasteries to reduce spending on temple construction
in 1998, journalist Sanitsuda Ekachai linked the commercialization of
Buddhism with both animism and the residual impact of Thailand's
political history of military rule:

A rare national Sangha meeting early this week was initiated by Deputy Educa-
tion Minister Arkhom Engchuan in the wake of the public outrage at temple
vultures who turn religious ceremonies and animistic beliefs into money spin-
ners. . . . Mr Arkhom made it clear he wanted monks to stop building big temples
and raising funds through the commercialisation of Buddhism. . . . This obses-
sion with materialism is a legacy of the 1962 Sangha Law drawn up under the
influence of the military dictatorship. It concentrates power in a small group of

senior monks and maintains the Sangha's feudal ranking and promotion system.[27]

Both the supernaturalist and doctrinalist views of Thai religiosity take some form of development and economic prosperity as their objective, but they provide alternative symbolisms and discourses within which this socio-economic goal is imagined, and propose different routes towards its realization. In the twentieth century, Thailand's transformations produced radically opposed religious and cultural models, one doctrinalist and the other supernaturalist, which at the turn of the century now compete for popular acceptance. During the boom years, the supernaturalists dominated, and while they would not have seen themselves as radical, their de-emphasis of doctrinal Buddhism in effect challenged the historical hierarchy which had long placed Theravada Buddhism above both Brahmanism and animism as the most prestigious Thai religious form. During the boom, a less stratified, more horizontal and more diverse religious formation emerged, in which Thai Theravada and Chinese Mahayana Buddhisms, Brahmanism, and animism came to occupy more similar positions in terms of prestige and honour. The recent post-crash resurgence of doctrinalist Buddhism and the related vocal critiques of supernaturalism seek to re-centre Theravada Buddhism and re-establish its dominant position in the vertical hierarchy of Thailand's syncretic religion. In the immediate post-crash period, Thailand's ever-changing patterns of religious practice and adherence entered a phase marked by increased internal dissension and intensified debate. However, it seems highly unlikely that the resurgent doctrinalists will succeed in unscrambling the egg of Thailand's hybrid religious forms by purging popular religiosity of its supernatural and, in their eyes, non-Buddhist elements.

[27] *Bangkok Post* (Internet edition – www.bangkokpost.net), 18 June 1998, 'Commentary: Sangha: the order of the privileged', by Sanitsuda Ekachai.

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Book Reviews

Women in the Footsteps of the Buddha. Struggle for Liberation in the *Therīgāthā*
Katheryn R. Blackstone, 1998
London, Curzon Press
xiv + 186 pp., ISBN 0 7007 0962 2

Contemporary theoretical developments in religion and gender continue to produce exciting new scholarship in many areas of religious studies. One example is the re-examination of well known religious texts from a feminist perspective, which helps to explore the voices of women and shows the pervasiveness of established stereotypes about men and women whilst uncovering fresh insights about women's own religious lives and their motivation. Feminist religious scholarship has been particularly productive in the study of Buddhism. Kathryn Blackstone's finely honed study, based on a Canadian MA dissertation, makes an excellent contribution to the growing number of works enlightening us about women's experiences and achievements in Buddhism.

Her innovative research provides us with a critical new reading of the 73 poems of the *Therīgāthā*, a Pali Buddhist classic thought to date from the 6th century CE, but based on long oral transmission, expressing the experience of Buddhist nuns in their search for liberation. These texts are unique in focusing on female religious experience and in their claim to female authorship (debated by some authors, but upheld by Blackstone), being the only canonical text in world religious literature attributed to women.

Blackstone writes from an acknowledged feminist perspective and carefully compares the experience of the early *bhikkunīs*, as described in the *Therīgāthā*, with those of the male *bhikkus* in the companion text of the *Theragāthā* which contains 264 poems by male authors. Her close comparative reading reveals striking gender differences in the emphasis placed by Buddhist monks and nuns on different aspects of their experience and search for liberation. The author explains in her Introduction how she employs the word 'liberation' in a double sense as referring to both the Buddhist meaning as a search for deliverance from suffering and the round of rebirths, and in a feminist sense as women's liberation from gender constraints and oppression. The study is carefully structured and tightly argued in five well focused chapters which proceed from the 'Language of Liberation' in the two texts to three major themes dealing with attitudes to renunciation, the body, and the environment, and concludes with a final chapter on 'Struggle for liberation in the *Therīgāthā*'. The main arguments are supported by detailed tables of textual references listed in five appendices, followed by an analytically organised bibliography (on texts, translations, scholarship on women in Buddhism, Buddhism in general, and on theoretical works).

The comparative analysis of the texts by male and female authors reveals a common vocabulary about liberation, but also the use of very different examples and a portrayal of different attitudes in reflecting on the experience of liberation. Blackstone's analysis demonstrates clearly how, in spite of their similarities, these texts authored by men and women show significant gender differences. Buddhist writings consistently reflect

patriarchal and androcentric attitudes towards women and assume women's subordination to men in both secular and religious realms. These two important early Buddhist texts also make clear that Buddhism was not egalitarian, but that the *bhikkunīs* were explicitly discriminated against and always remained subordinate to the monks. The author is meticulous in supporting all her arguments with precise references to examples from both texts. She shows in particular a difference in emphasis between male and female authors in their attitudes to relationships, the degree of personalisation and abstraction they display, and their experiences of, and responses to, conflict. These differences in approach raise some interesting issues about the nature of detachment that characterises a liberated individual.

Specialists of Buddhist studies, especially those concerned with the Pali canon, will welcome this careful scrutiny of foundational texts and need to take note of the new conclusions of this close comparative reading. Those interested in women and religion will be particularly interested in the concluding chapter which briefly sets the findings within the wider context of contemporary gender debates. Although occasionally somewhat didactic in style and repetitive in its vocabulary, this is a highly commendable book, of considerable interest not only to Buddhist scholars, but also to those concerned with women studies and gender issues in religion. Scholars will no doubt go on asking further questions about these texts. For me, the chapter on the body, which provides such a detailed description of Buddhist attitudes to 'the disgusting nature of the body', would have gained considerably by a critical exploration of some of the questions raised by the markedly negative attitude to the body as a well known topos in Buddhist texts.

However, notwithstanding many further questions, there is no doubt that the female renunciants in the poems of the *Therīgāthā*, however constrained by their social context, provide us with a shining example of women's independent religiosity and persistent struggle for liberation in both a social and religious sense.

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The Supreme Wisdom of the *Upaniṣads*. An Introduction
KLAUS G. WITZ, 1998
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Oriental philosophies are admittedly much more prone than Western systems of thought and, in particular, than modern thinkers to allowing for the existence of some kind of spiritual dimension behind the visible universe and to endowing it with higher properties such as intelligence, wisdom and final truth. This is perhaps more true with respect to Indian philosophical traditions than any others; the *upaniṣads* are the best illustration of it and occupy the central position in or represent the starting point of several systems of Indian thought.

Western indologists have typically been restrained when presenting and assessing the contents of relevant philosophical or religious texts or reporting on living representatives of their teachings. There have been exceptions, of course. Thus the *upaniṣads* were the consolation of Schopenhauer's life, Heinrich Zimmer wrote an appreciative book about Ramana Maharṣi and Edward Conze was a professed Buddhist. But often it is the case that enthusiastic advocates of the relevance of Eastern wisdom for our age, who

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From Brahmanism to Buddhism

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ABSTRACT   *It is argued that early (canonical) Buddhism to a very considerable extent can and should be seen as reformed Brahmanism.*

Speculations about cosmogony in Buddhist sûtras can be traced back to Vedic sources, above all Rigveda 10.129 & 10.90—two hymns that play a similar fundamental role in the early Upanisads.

Like the immortal and unmanifest Brahman and the mortal and manifest Brahmā, the Buddha, as a mythological Bhagavat, also had two forms (or bodies). In his highest form he is "the profound" beyond being and non-being, like Brahman. As a teacher, he is like Brahmā. By suppressing mind and by getting rid of desire a Buddhist should "swim" back to the profound beyond the duality of life and death, which is also suffering. One becomes real and true by seeing the causal identity of tat and tvam, i.e. of macrocosm and microcosm. The spiritual ideals of early Buddhism are thus founded on natural philosophy.

Introduction

In earlier as well as later Indian Buddhist sources we can often read, that the *sramana* Gautama is identified with Brahmā (m.), or Mahābrahmā, that his Dharma is identified with Brahman (n.), that he and his monks—those that follow the true *mārga*—are the true brahmans, in other words that the *ratnatraya* of Buddhism is the true form of Brahmanism. Furthermore, Brahman and Nirvāna are used as synonyms (not just in Buddhist texts), the Buddha is said to know the Veda(s), and the purpose of following his teaching about Dharma *(dharmadesanā)* is to become one with Brahman [1].

In a passage in the old *Suttanipāta* (II.7) some wealthy brahmans ask Bhagavat: "Do brahmans now, Gotama, live in conformity with the brahmanical lore of the brahmans of old?" "No, brahmans, brahmans now do not live in conformity with the brahmanical lore of the brahmans of old." "Then let the venerable Gotama tell us about the brahmanical lore of the brahmans of old, if it is not too much trouble for him." "Then listen, brahmans, pay careful attention. I shall tell you" [2].

There are, of course, numerous scriptural passages to the same effect: that Gautama was considered (and considered himself) an authority on matters of Brahman, that he, in other words, was considered a Vedic scholar. The Buddha, in short, is the true Brahmā, who teaches about the true Brahman to his disciples, the true brahmans. If this is historically true, one can in this sense claim that ancient Buddhism is reformed Brahmanism [3].

The purpose of this paper is to establish this thesis from various independent angles by a method that could perhaps be described as "spiritual palaeontology"; or, as an evolutionist, one might prefer to speak of "mental phylogeny". The main task is to explore and pin down the historical context in which Gautama (the historical or

mythical) developed what the sources transmit to us as being fundamental Buddhist ideas.

In the Beginning

I am tempted to start with the exaggeration that the entire body of Buddhist sūtras can be seen as one huge commentary and elaboration of a few Vedic passages, the most important of which is undoubtedly RV 10.129, the celebrated cosmogonic hymn from Prajāpati Paramesthin [4]:

1. *nāsad āsīn nó sád āsīt tadā́nīṃ   nāsīd rájo nó viomā paró yát/*
   kim āvarīvaḥ kúha kásya śármann   ámbhaḥ kim āsīd gáhanaṃ gabhīrám//
2. *ná mṛtyúr āsīd amṛ́tam ná tárhi   ná rā́triyā áhna āsīt praketáḥ/*
   ā́nīd avātáṃ svadháyā tád ékaṃ   tásmād dhānyán ná paráḥ kiṃ canāsa//
3. *táma āsīt támasā gūḷhám ágre   apraketáṃ saliláṃ sárvam ā idám/*
   tuchyénābhú ápihitaṃ yád āsīt   tápasas tán mahinā́jāyataíkam//
4. *kā́mas tád ágre sám avartatā́dhi   mánaso rétaḥ prathamáṃ yád ásīt/*
   sató bándhum ásati nir avindan   hṛdí pratī́ṣyā kaváyo manīṣā́//
5. *tiraścíno vítato raśmír eṣām   adháḥ svid āsī3d upári svid āsī3t/*
   retodhā́ āsan mahimā́na ēsan   svadhā́ avástāt práyatiḥ parástāt//
6. *kó addhā́ veda ká ihá prá vocat   kúta ā́jātā kúta iyáṃ vísṛṣṭiḥ/*
   arvā́g devā́ asyá visárjanena   áthā kó veda yáta ābabhū́va//
7. *iyáṃ vísṛṣṭir yáta ābabhū́va   yádi vā dadhé yádi vā ná/ yó asyā́dhyakṣaḥ*
   paramé víoman   só aṅgá veda yádi vā ná véda//

1. There was not the non-existent nor the existent then; there was not the air nor the heaven which is beyond. What did it contain? Where? In whose protection? Was there water, unfathomable, profound?
2. There was not death nor immortality then. There was not the beacon of night, nor of day. That one breathed, windless, by its own power. Other than that there was not anything beyond.
3. Darkness was in the beginning hidden by darkness; indistinguishable, this all was water. That which, coming in to being, was covered with the void, that One arose through the power of heat.
4. Desire in the beginning came upon that, (desire) that was the first seed of mind. Sages seeking in (their) hearts with wisdom found out the bond of the existent in the non-existent.
5. Their cord was extended across: was there below or was there above? There were impregnators, there were powers; there was energy below, there was impulse above.
6. Who knows truly? Who shall here declare, whence is this creation? By the creation of this (universe) the gods (come) afterwards: who then knows whence it has arisen?
7. Whence this creation has arisen; whether he founded it or did not: he who in the highest heaven is its surveyor, he only knows, or else he knows not.

It is entirely immaterial to our purpose that some of these lines are probably as obscure to us as they were to the ancient Indians. The important facts are these:

To begin with, before *sat* and *asat*, there "was" *tad ekam*; it is *gahanaṃ gabhīram*—a

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gap ginnunge, Greek *Chaos.* The "elements" are not yet manifest. But then *kāma* and *manas* become active, and *sat* and *asat* become manifest. The world, everything, is "created", or revealed. Somehow the solution to the mystery of creation/evolution can be known in one's heart.

Indologists recognised early the general importance of this hymn for the study of later Indian philosophy. Geldner pointed out some relevant passages from Vedic literature:

> "Dieses Eine fürwahr (*ekaṃ vā idáṃ*) hat sich zu dem All ([*idaṃ*] *sarvam*) entwickelt" (RV 8.58.2); "Das Eine (*ekam*) enthällt alles, was sich bewegt und was feststeht, was geht und fliegt; verschiedenartig hat es sich entwickelt" (3.54.8); "Das, was nur ein Eines ist (*ekaṃ sat*), benennen die Sprachkundigen (*vipra*) vielfach" (1.164.46).

> This One, for sure, has evolved itself into the Universe. The One contains everything that moves and does not move, that walks and that flies; in different ways it has evolved itself. That which is only One, those knowing language speak of in various ways.

In 10.82.6 *ekam* is said to rest in the navel of the unborn (*aja*), and in 1.164.6 *ekam* is *ajasya rūpe.* The unborn reality is thus an ancient Vedic idea [5].

So, already in the *Ṛgveda* (RV) the "reality" of something "unborn", the One, profoundly beyond being and nonbeing is acknowledged as the ultimate source of the universe, or the "world".

Later *tad ekam* was identified with Brahman (n.), and that Brahman, again, was recognised as having *two* forms. A very early and very explicit passage to this effect is *Bṛhadāranyaka-Upaniṣad* IV.3: *dve vāva Brahmaṇo rūpe mūrtañ caivāmūrtañ ca martyañ cāmṛtañ ca.* Brahman has two forms, a bodily and a bodiless, a mortal and an immortal [6].

When the supreme god (if we can use that expression), though bodiless and immortal, spontaneously manifested himself/itself in a bodily and mortal form (*rūpa*), the technical term used for his physical form was Bhagavat (from *bhaga* and *vat*). Whereas the term *bhaga* is often used of the Vedic gods (Indra, Agni, *et al.*) *bhaga-vat* has not yet obtained the technical meaning that later on applies to virtually any immortal being that spontaneously appears in a mortal frame. (We are here at the source of the later avatar theory.)

When we therefore in later literature come across such phrases as Buddho bhagavān Viṣṇur bhagavān, Kapilo bhagavān, etc, it would be very misleading simply to treat *bhagavān* as a mere honorific term, for it in fact reflects an original idea of the two distinct forms of Brahman. This, then, means that the common phrase Buddho bhagavān should not just be translated "The Lord Buddha", or the like, but: Buddha in his manifest, mortal, form. Implicit here is the idea of *two* forms of the Buddha.

I shall revert to this fundamental point but first I shall take up a few related matters.

Going beyond *sat* and *asat*

Programmatic not just of Madhyamaka but of Mahāyāna and to some extent also of early Buddhism is the first verse of Nāgārjuna's *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* [7]:

astināstivyatikrāntā buddhir yeṣāṃ nirāśrayā /
gambhīras tair nirālambaḥ pratyayārtho vibhāvyate //

Those whose intelligence (*buddhi*) has transcended being and non-being and is unsupported have discovered the profound and inobjective meaning of "condition". (As translated in my *Nagarjuniana*, p. 103.)

There is something (here termed *pratyayārtha*, to which we shall also come back), which is *gambhīra* and it can be developed, or realised, by those whose *buddhi* (a synonym of *dhī, mati, prajñā* and the like) has gone beyond *asti* and *nāsti*, elsewhere commonly expressed as *sat* and *asat*.

Like the poet of RV 10.129, the great *ācārya* of *Mahāyāna* is concerned, from the very start, with the Profound beyond *sat* and *asat*. Being a learned Sanskritist and brahman before converting to Mahāyāna, it goes without saying that he would have known this Vedic hymn by heart.

This concern can be traced back to the earliest canonical Buddhist scriptures. Most important in this regard is the *Brahmajālasūtra*, the authority of which Mahāyāna authors often refer to [8]. (The text is still available in Pāli, Tibetan, Mongolian, Chinese and Sanskrit fragments.) In a recurring old formula, the author (compiler) assures us that he is here concerned with certain profound principles (*dhammā gambhīrā*) etc., *ye Tathāgato sayaṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā pavedeti*. I think R. Otto Franke was on the right track when he, referring to this old formula, spoke of "Das einheitliche Thema des Dīghanikāya". The technical meaning of *bhagavān*, however, escaped him. And so did the precise historical context [9].

The sūtra can almost be seen as a commentary on RV 10.129. It is concerned with the *profound* dharmas (10.129.1), and when it says that the Tathāgata himself has known these *and* pronounced, or taught them (to others), this is almost a direct reply to the question in 10.129.6:

> *kó addhā́ veda, ká ihá právocat?*
> Who really knows? Who can declare it here (in this world)?

There is a clear distinction between knowing, and declaring (to others) what one knows. This duality is reflected in the double nature of a Bhagavat. He declares (in words) what he is (knowledge).

The "unifying theme" of DN, in other words, is to give a reply to a celebrated line in RV 10.129.

Otherwise the sūtra—the *Brahmajālasūtra*—is concerned with those (ignorant) brahmans etc. who maintain some 62 theories (*dṛṣṭi*) about the soul and the world based on the notion of the past and/or the future. All such speculations (*dṛṣṭi*) are condemned by the Tathāgata (who has "seen for himself") because brahmans etc. get entrapped and are caught in the net by them. The basic error consists in "seeing" or believing in a first or final term of anything. The truth of the matter is that there is no *pūrvānta*, no *aparānta*. A given *dṛṣṭi* always must express itself in terms of *sat/asti* or *asat/nāsti*. Since there is actually no first or final term, it is not valid to make any absolute distinction between the two, and all *dṛṣṭis* must be abolished in order to discover (*vibhāvyate*) the Profound beyond *asti* and *nāsti*—the two extremes (*anta*) of *śāśvata* and *uccheda*.

Evolution

Another sūtra that relates to RV 10.129, also in the DN, is the *Aggañña*, available in Pāli as well as Chinese. It presents us with a cosmogonic Buddhist myth ("A Book of

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Genesis", Rhys Davids), the importance of which was recognised by Konrad Meisig (p. 61):

> Dunkelheit, Dichte (bzw. Enge) und Einheit gehören schon im ṛgvedischen Hymnus vom Ursprung der Welt (X 129) zusammen. Mit eben diesen drei Eigenschaften wird der Zustand vor dem Beginn der kosmischen Emanation charakterisiert ... . Die in der Kosmogonie versuchte Weltergründung ist profan, weil sie die Welt aus sich selbst heraus erklärt ... . Dem Mythos liegt ein zyklisches Weltbild zugrunde, er kommt deshalb ohne einen Schöpfergott aus. Die Welt hat weder Anfang noch Ende; sie dehnt sich nur aus und zieht sich wieder zusammen, sie expandiert und verdichtet sich erneut (*nivartate-saṃvartate*), über lange—aber nicht unendlich lange—Zeiträume ... . Dieses Weltbild ist ebenso für den Hinduismus massgeblich und im indischen Kulturkreis überhaupt vorherrschend geworden [10].

> Darkness, density (or narrowness) and unity belong together already in the Rigvedic hymn of creation (X 129). The state before the cosmic emanation is, in fact, characterised by these three features ... . The attempt, in this cosmogony, to explain the world is profane, because it explains the world from or out of itself ... . The basis of the myth is a cyclical view of the world; there is, therefore, no need of a creator god. The world has neither beginning nor end; it merely expands and withdraws itself, it expands and becomes dense again and again, over long—but not endlessly long—periods ... . This view of the world is also normative for Hinduism and it has been dominant in the Indian cultural sphere in general.

The text relates (DN III, 84–85) how *ayaṃ loko saṃvaṭṭati* and how *ayaṃ loko vivaṭṭati*. As the world passes away and evolves anew (in a cyclus without beginning and end) there are certain beings "made of mind" (*manomaya*). In the beginning there is a mass of water (*ekodakībhūtam*), darkness, deep darkness. The sun and the moon do not appear, no stars and no constellations appeared, night and day were not manifest ... . Eventually, earth was spread out in the waters [11].

So here too Tathāgata presents himself as a Vedic scholar. No wonder that the sūtra introduces this piece of Vedic exegesis with words that identify Tathāgata with Dharmakāya, or Brahmakāya, and Dharmabhūta or Brahmabhūta (DN III, 84).

Meisig wrote (p. 61):

> Der Aggañña-Mythos behandelt eine Reihe von Fragen, die alle so unbuddhistisch wie nur möglich sind. Buddhistisch wäre die Frage nach der Erlösung.

> The *Aggañña* Myth treats a number of questions that are about as un-Buddhist as can be. Buddhist is only the question about the liberation ... .

The opposite is, of course, true. Even Meisig himself does not question the authenticity of the archaic text found in the Buddhist canon. And how could he? So how can it be "unbuddhistisch'? Moreover, the text makes a lot of good sense *once it is seen in its proper context*. Like so many other Buddhist texts it is concerned with issues raised in RV 10.129, and thereby, as we shall see, also with *mokṣa*.

On kāma and manas

In RV 10.129.4 we were told:

kāmas tád ágre sám avartatādhi mánaso rétah prathamáṃ yád āsīt

In the beginning *kāma* came upon that, that was the first seed of *manas*. Not only do we note that the word *sam + vṛt* is used to describe the initial cosmogonic activity (as in the *Aggañña: saṃvaṭṭati*), but also that *kāma* and *manas* are, so to speak, the fundamental evil, i.e. from the perspective of one who wants to get back to the Profound.

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Up.* III.2.7 explains why:

manasā hi kāmān kāmayate.

It is, of course, by (means of) mind that one desires (i.e. creates) desires.

In the Buddhist texts the fundamental evils are usually *tṛṣṇā* and *avidyā*—more or less synonyms of *kāma* and *manas*. The *Aggañña* spoke of beings consisting of *manas*, who, due to *tṛṣṇā*, became responsible for evolution. Possibly Gautama introduced the terms *tṛṣṇā* and *avidyā* in this context [12].

It only takes a glance at the Buddhist dictionaries under *kāma-* and *mano/mana(s)* to conclude that these two concepts were among the most important of all in ancient Buddhism.

When the Buddha propounded his own theory of causality, *pratītyasamutpāda*, to account for the genesis of *duḥkham* (about which below) he still placed *avidyā* or *tṛṣṇā* at the root.

An old *gāthā* is often ascribed to the Buddha (e.g. *Prasannapadā*, pp. 350; 451):

kāma, jānāmi te mūlaṃ saṃkalpāt kila jāyase /
na tvāṃ saṃkalpayiṣyāmi tato me na bhaviṣyasi // [13]

Desire, I now know your root! Surely, you are born from mental volition. I will no longer make you (an object) of mental volition. Therefore, you will no longer be (a problem for) me!

It almost sounds like a piece of autobiography; the Buddha has finally found the *mūla* (cf. *retah* above) of *kāma*, and he has found it in *saṃkalpa*, the intentional activity of mind, also a common canonical expression.

Once again, the verse (if authentic) can easily be understood as a piece of Vedic exegesis on the part of Gautama.

The final chapter of the Pāli *Dhammapada* (PD)—corresponding to the first chapter of the "Gāndhārī" *Dharmapada* (GD), with numerous parallels in *Udānavarga*, *Saṃyutta*, etc.—transmits a number of verses, some of them obviously quite archaic, that are supposed by tradition to go back to the Buddha himself. Like so many other canonical texts they deal with the "true" brahman (*brāhmaṇa*).

Some of the otherwise vague or obscure verses suddenly make very good sense when seen in the perspective of RV 10.129, as suggested above. A few examples: Above all the true brahman should get rid of *kāma* (PD 383, 401, 415 (cf. 416); GD 9, 10, 20, 21, 33); he should know the uncreated, somehow beyond duality, the dharma etc., and thus get rid of *duḥkham*. And then we come to the interesting verse (PD 390—GD 15, see Brough, p. 121):

na brāhmaṇass' etad akiñci seyyo

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> *yadā nisedho manaso piyehi/*
> *yato yato himsamano nivattati*
> *tato tato sammati-m-eva duḥkham//*

I will not here take up space discussing this difficult verse to which Brough assigns a crux, but merely suggest this solution: The first part is a question: Is *etad akiñci* (= *tad ekam*) not preferable for a true brahman, (the state) when his *manas* (read: *hi 'ssa mano*) is held back from pleasures? The second part is an answer: Yes, for the more his mind stops its activity, the more "suffering" ceases. (The final line is still very problematic.) The verse, in brief, deals with *cittavṛttinirodha*, or yoga.The *manas*, responsible for *kāma*, must cease its activity before one (i.e. the yogi(n)) can attain *etad akiñci* [14]. There are other canonical verses to the same effect (Brough, p. 120). Thus *Sam.* I, 49:

> *nappahāya munī kāme ekattam upapajjati*

has a Sanskrit parallel in *Udāna* XI.1:

> *nāprahāya muniḥ kāmān ekatvam adhigacchati*

and DP 383:

> *saṅkhārānam khayam ñatvā akataññu si brāhmaṇa*

So the *akata, etad akiñci, ekattam* and *ekatvam* refer to the same *gahanam ga(m)bhīram* and *tad ekam*, as did RV 10.129. Surely, the *vipras* speak of *ekam sat* in many ways!

In PD 394 we have another case where translators, not recognising the historical context, seem to have read their own ideas into the text:

> *kim te jaṭāhi dummedha kim te ajinasāṭiyā?*
> *abbhantaram te gahanam bāhiram parimajjasi*

Radhakrishnan, for instance, translates (in his book S. Radhakrishnan (1950) *The Dhammapada* (Oxford) p. 180): "What is the use of matted hair, O fool, what of the raiment of goat-skins? Thine inward nature is full of wickedness; the outside thou makest clean." Fausbøll, (1900) *The Dhammapada* (London) p. 89, is very literal: *Quid tibi cum capillis religatis, stulte? quid tibi cum amictu ex pellibus facto? interna tua impervia (sunt), externa terges.* As will be seen, I tend to agree with the view of Max Müller, as quoted by Radhakrishnan, op. cit. p. 29: "Buddhism is ... the highest Brâhmanism popularized, everything esoteric being abolished, the priesthood replaced by monks, and these monks being in their true character the successors and representatives of the enlightened dwellers in the forest of former ages".

Here *abbhantaram* is, of course, an adjective or adverb (see CPD, s.v.), meaning "being within, inside", as opposed to *bāhiram*. The "Buddha" is reminding the ignorant listener that *gahanam* (= *tad ekam*, etc.) is (to be found) within, so it is foolish to be so concerned about "external appearances". Accordingly, in PD 403 the real *brāhmaṇa* is described as *gambhīrapañña*—he knows the Profound—the Profound *what?*—The *gahanam ga(m)bhīram* of RV 10.129.1, needless to add. What we are searching for, the Vedic poet told us, is to be found inside in our heart. So *abbhantaram* is an echo of *hṛdi*, as are several other terms in this chapter of PD/GD, etc.

Another term that belongs to this context is *amatogadham* (PD 411), glossed by *amatabbhantaram*, and a synonym of *nirvāṇa* (cf. CPD, s.v.). It is the "depth" of *amṛta*, and as such much the same as the *gahanam ga(m)bhīram.*

But how can all these terms become synonyms, more or less, of *nirvāṇa*, one of the four *satyas* of the Aryans?

The Problem of Nirvāṇa

I do not here need to recall that it has been the topic of much learned discussion and controversy. As PED, p. 362 correctly noticed under *nibbāna*: "Only in the older texts do we find references to a simile of the *wind* and the flame ... moreover, one has to bear in mind that native commentators themselves never thought of explaining *nibbāna* by anything like blowing (*vāta*) ... ."

This, I suggest, is because they did not, of course, tackle the problem of *nirvāṇa* in a historical fashion. Looking for the historical origin of the term, I suggest that it has its roots in RV 10. 129.2:

ānid avātáṃ svadháyā tád ékam

That One breathed, *windless*, by its own power [15].

So, whoever first coined the term *nir-vāṇa* had in mind *tad ekam*, which was likewise *a-vātám*.

I can think of no more simple or natural suggestion as to the origin of the concept of *nirvāṇa*. That the original context was later forgotten is, of course, only what one would expect.

The Brahmanical sources seem to have avoided for long the *term* (not the idea) *nirvāṇa*—it is not to be found in any of the eighteen principal Upaniṣads—until finally the author of the *Gītā* coined the term *brahma-nirvāṇa* (2.72). But the concept of a peaceful, serene and windless place was, as we see from the not uncommon *nivāta* (adj.) was familiar to them [16].

The concept of *nirvāṇa* is intimately related, or intimately opposed, to that of *saṃsāra*—also a concept that does not yet occur in the early Vedic/Brahmanical literature. So again we have to go *ad fontes*.

The Origin of Saṃsāra

The word is usually translated as transmigration, but such a translation fails to do justice to the etymology of the word. And the ancient Indian thinkers *were* conscious of etymology! Nor does it make much sense to speak of transmigration without assuming any subject of transmigration, and how can one, for instance, in a compound such as *vacīsaṃsāra* (ref. in PED, s.v.), exchange of words, or in *saṃsāracakra*, speak of anything that transmigrates?

As said, the word *saṃsāra*, from *sam* and the root *sṛ*, flow together, does *not* occur as such in early literature, but in RV there is one occurrence (9.97.45) of the finite verb where a drop of Soma is said to flow together *with* milk and water. So the logic of the term *saṃsāra* requires something to flow together with something (else). There must be at least two items to make *saṃsāra*. (This fact is not suggested by "transmigration".) When he coined the term, its author must have been thinking of some sort of *dvaya*, a set of two(s). We must then ask: "*What* flows together with *what*?"

Again we may have recourse to one of the *logia* often ascribed to Bhagavat: *anavarāgro hi bhikṣavo jātijarāmaraṇasaṃsāraḥ* [17]. It is not here a question of the *transmigration* of *jātijarāmaraṇam*, birth, old age, death, but rather of life and death

flowing into one another without beginning or end in time and space. Another ancient term for this constant coming and going is *ājavaṃjavībhāva* (e.g. *Prasannapadā*, p. 218; 529).

The idea that life (birth) and death, etc., *flow together* without any first or final term has various important implications. No absolute distinction can be made between *sat* and *asat*. Being mutually dependent all appearances strictly speaking "flow together". It cannot be otherwise if one takes a cyclic view of causality. It is therefore a fundamental error—a matter of *tṛṣṇā* or *avidyā*—to hang on to any absolute distinction between *sat* and *asat*. The presence of *sat* and *asat* in itself implies a longing for the original state before the manifestation of *sat* and *asat*.

To begin with, before *sat* and *asat*, the Vedic poet told us, there was, perhaps, *ambhaḥ*, water, "indistinguishable, this was all water" (10.129.1). And water may indeed *flow*. There was no death then, but *kāma* and *manas* became active, a storm arose, and everything, life and death, began flowing together.

Life in *saṃsāra*, in other words, is much like waves on the the primeval ocean of the *gahanaṃ ga(m)bhīram*. The distinction between *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, therefore, is not absolute. It does make sense when the yogic sources inform us that the unreal duality disappears in the serenity of mind.

The Original Meaning of *Duḥkham*

Again the word is not found in RV, even though the idea of salvation from death, the central evil, can be traced back to Vedic times. In the early Upaniṣads the word *duḥkham* is only found twice: *Chāndogya* VII.26.2 and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* IV.4.14, in both cases in verses that do not seem very archaic. It is a rather artifical term, from *duḥ* and *kham*, a bad opening, or canal (for water).

Common is the expression *sarvaṃ duḥkham*. Recalling that *sarvam (idam)* is a fixed term for the manifest world (RV 8.58.2, quoted above), or developed from *ekam* (RV 3.54.8), *duḥkham* originally indicated the microcosm as opposed to, or linked together with (by means of a canal) to the macrocosm [18]. It is an image of the unhappy manifestation/emanation of *tad ekam*. It is therefore immediately obvious why *duḥkha(ṃ)* later on is used to describe almost any place having to do with *saṃsāra*. When the Buddha says *sarvaṃ duḥkham*, and explains *sarvam* by the five *skandhas*, etc., and furthermore, explains the five *skandhas* by the term *loka*, open space, the world of the individual, it seems fairly certain that the original notion of *duḥkham* had to do with the observation that the microcosm of the individual due to *kāma/tṛṣṇā* and *manas/ avidyā*, unfortunately had been separated from the macrocosm. But there was still a "canal" that linked the two together.

The two words *duḥkham* and *saṃsāra* were conceived when the image of the primeval waters was still vivid in mind. They both suggest *flowing*, or emanation, the *iyaṃ visṛṣṭiḥ* of RV 10.129.6 & 7—not "creation", but emission, discharge.

No wonder then that the Buddha exhorts his students to cross the *ocean* of *saṃsāra*, to cut off the stream—*chinda sotam!* (from Sanskrit *srotas*). A stanza such as *Dhamma-pada* 218 (cor. to *Udāna* II.9) only really becomes intelligible with this imagery in mind:

> *chandajāto anakkhāte manasā ca phuṭo siyā /*
> *kāmesu ca appaṭibaddhacitto uddhaṃsoto 'ti vuccati //*

One should swim up the stream to *anakkhāta* (Cy. *nirvāṇa*) suffused by *manas*, without having one's *citta* fettered to any object of *kāma*. The *anakkhāta*, ineffable, invisible (cf.

Vedic *khyā!)*, corresponds well to *apraketam* of RV 10.129.3, as do *kāma* and *manas*, and, of course, again, the image of flowing.

The later commentators, as one would expect, seem to be unaware of the original historical context. But the image of flowing water was very much alive to the individual who first coined the words just discussed.

As to the common expression *ekāgra(tā)*, said of *citta* (cf. CPD II, p. 583), one-pointedness, it may originally also have belonged in this context, thus meaning: having one's mind (*citta hṛdaya/hṛd*) on *eka(m)/agra*—on the One—the *tad ekam agre*. Since the Buddhists often use *citta* in the sense of heart, such an interpretation would fit nicely with the exhortation implicit in RV 10.129.4: ... *nir avindan hṛdi pratīṣyā kavayo manīṣā*. The "truth" about *sat* and *asat* is to be found *in* one's heart [19].

On *Satyam*

The Buddha spoke of the truth, or truths, that he had personally realised, sometimes he spoke of only one *satyam*, that of *nirvāṇa*, but he also spoke of four Aryan truths: *duḥkham* (= *upādānaskandha*), *duḥkhasamudaya* (= *tṛṣṇā*), *duḥkhanirodha* (= *nirvāṇa*), and the *mārga* (or *pratipad*) leading to *duḥkhanirodha*. To follow the path of the great physician meant to become perfect in *śīla*, *samādhi* and *prajñā*. He pointed out a Middle Path from *duḥkham* to its *nirodha*, i.e. from *saṃsāra* to *nirvāṇa*. It was a path "between extremes", including those of *sat* and *asat*. This constituted his *dharmadeśanā*, for *dharma* has to do with *satya* [20].

The two terms *satyam* and *dharma* are closely related. The former is Vedic, the latter is not. The true brahman is one in whom both are present, *Dhammapada* 393:

> *yamhi saccañ ca dharmo ca so sukhi so ca brāhmaṇo*

It is, so to speak, the presence of *dharma* and *satyam* in man that links microcosm together with macrocosm. Famous are the words of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Up.* II.5.11-12:

> *ayaṃ dharmaḥ sarveṣāṃ bhūtānāṃ madhu. asya dharmasya sarvāṇi bhūtāni madhu. yaś cāyam asmin dharme tejomayo 'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣo yaś cāyam adhyātmaṃ dhārmas tejomayo 'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣo 'yam eva sa yo 'yam ātmā. idam amṛtam idaṃ brahmedaṃ sarvam.*
>
> *idaṃ satyaṃ sarveṣāṃ bhūtānāṃ madhu. asya satyasya sarvāṇi bhūtāni madhu. yaś cāyam asmin satye tejomayo 'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣo yaś cāyam adhyātmaṃ sātyas tejomayo 'mṛtamayaḥ puruṣo 'yam eva sa yo 'yam ātmā. idam amṛtam idaṃ brahmedaṃ sarvam.* [21]

Patrick Olivelle (1996) *Upaniṣads* (Oxford) pp. 31–32, translates: "This Law (dharma) is the honey of all beings, and all beings are the honey of this Law. The radiant and immortal person in the law and, in the case of the body, the radiant and immortal person devoted to the law—they are both one's self. It is the immortal; it is *brahman*; it is the Whole. This Truth is the honey of all beings, and all beings are the honey of this Truth. The radiant and immortal person in Truth and, in the case of the body, the radiant and immortal person devoted to Truth—they are both one's self. It is the immortal; it is *brahman*; it is the Whole."

In brief: to the extent that the individual has a share of *dharma* and *satyam*, it is

immortal, Brahman, it All. Here, again, we see that the duality between micro- and macrocosm is ultimately unreal. The duality is, literally speaking, "untrue".

An old *logion*, often ascribed to the Buddha, makes fine sense in this context:

etad dhi bhikṣavaḥ paramaṃ satyaṃ yad uta amoṣadharma nirvāṇaṃ, sar-
vasaṃskārāś ca mṛsā moṣadharmāṇah. [22]

This, dear monks, is surely the highest truth, namely that Nirvana is something not false whereas all creative powers, being false, are delusive.

When Buddhist sources—especially those of Mahāyāna—speak of *dve satye* this distinction corresponds to that of *dve vāva Brahmaṇo rūpe ...* . There is really only one truth, the One, but it does make a difference whether one *knows* it or/and *talks* about it. In one sense *satyam* has to do with *jñāna*, in another it has to do with *kriyā*; so both are aspects of the same *dharma*. One can perhaps say that *satyam* is the *medium* through which *dharma* is expressed. Both can be known and spoken of but *dharma* would seem to "regulate" truth(s).

On Causality

Buddhist sources use the expression *ayaṃ dharmaḥ* in the sense of *pratītyasamutpāda*: This, *our*, Buddhist *dharma*. The purpose of teaching, or pointing out, this *dharma* is to show how *duḥkham—idaṃ sarvam*—comes about as a result of *tṛṣṇā/avidyā*—the old pair *kāma/manas*—operating in a certain way, by necessity and verifiable by personal experience. It was probably the most characteristic and original feature of early Buddhism, the result of admirably independent thinking on the part of Gautama.

The vagueness or silence of RV 10.129 on causality naturally opened the path for *brahmavādins* to speculate about *kāraṇa*. The earliest Buddhist and Jaina texts are already replete with such speculations (*dṛṣṭi*) about the relationship between macro- and microcosm. These thinkers could not remain satisfied with the mythical account of Brahman (n.) giving somehow rise to Mr. Brahmā (m.), the Prajāpati who then arranged the world as we happen to know it. Our sources for the earliest period are about as tantalising as they are often disappointing.

The Vedic texts and the early *Upaniṣads* do not yet have any clear concept of causality though the tendency to scientific thinking is very strong indeed. With Oldenberg we may here speak of "pre-scientific science".

At the time of Gautama the Indians, like the Greeks, were about to take the decisive step from *mythos* to *logos.*

The initial verses of *Śvetāśvatara-Up.* let philosophers (*brahmavid*) search for the *kāraṇa*—is it *kāla, svabhāva, niyati, yadṛcchā*, the elements, *puruṣa*, or a combination of some or all of these?

Similar lists of candidates for the post of being the sole *kāraṇa* are known from several Buddhist and Jaina sources.

Nāgārjuna, in his *Suhṛllekha* 50, rejects these six views of causality as being false: *yadṛcchā ('dod rgyal), kāla (dus), prakṛti (? raṇ bźin), svabhāva (ṅo bo ñid), Īśvara (dbaṅ phyug),* and *ahetuka (rgyu med can).*

In the Introduction to the *Akutobhayā* we find this list of wrong causes: Īśvara (*dbaṅ phyug*), *puruṣa (skyes bu), ubhaya (gñi ga), kāla (dus), prakṛti (? raṅ bźin), niyati (ṅes pa), pariṇāma ('gyur ba),* and *aṇu (rdul phra).*

The commentary to *Akṣaraśataka* 6 says:

> ... *rañ bźin dañ, dbañ phyug dañ, rdul phra rab dañ, phyogs dañ, dus la sogs thams cad rgyu ma yin te, bltos pa'i phyir ro.*

> Nature, God, atoms, directions, time, etc. are not at all causes, for (they always) depend on (something else).

Bhavya, in the first chapter of his *Prajñāpradīpa* mentions and rejects these 'bad causes': *svabhāva*, Īśvara, *puruṣa*, *pradhāna* (or *prakṛti*), *kāla*, Nārāyaṇa, etc. His commentator, the indefatigable Avalokitavrata adds: Brahman, Prajāpati, Manu, *daiva*, Druvāna (?) of the Persians, and Yuna (?) of the (Greek) Barbarians [23].

Candrakīrti has this list: *svabhāva*, Īśvara, *prakṛti*, *puruṣa*, *kala*, Nārāyaṇa, etc. [24].

Aśvaghoṣa, in his *Saundarananda* XVI.17 has : Īśvara, *prakṛti*, *kāla*, *svabhāva* (*vidhi?*), *yadṛcchā* ... (cf. *Maitrī-Up.* VI. 14–16).

It is inconceivable that some of these speculations about causality in some form should have been unknown to Gautama. As an educated intellectual and philosopher he would not have permitted himself to remain ignorant of what was going on in contemporary philosophical circles.

If we can trust our sources some of his contemporaries, called *adhiccasamuppaṇika*, asserted that things arise fortuitously, that they are *adhiccasamuppanna*. According to the commentators (cf. CPD I, p. 132) these people held that the world and the soul come about without *kāraṇa*, or according to *yadṛcchā*. In other words, they had a doctrine of *adhītya-samutpāda* [25].

Gautama's most original contribution to the theories of causality was that of *pratītya-samutpāda*. Again and again our sources ascribe this *logion* to Gautama:

> *yaḥ pratītyasamutpādaṃ paśyati sa dharmaṃ paśyati.* [26]

> He who sees (the causal principle) of (many causes and conditions) arising together in mutual dependence, he also sees the Dharma.

It seems natural to assume that Gautama coined the new word *pratītya-samutpāda*, taking his clue from those who ventured to explain the origin of the world and the soul in terms of *adhītya-samutpāda*.

The four Aryan truths about Dharma all had to do with *duḥkham*—what it is, how it comes about, and where and how one can become released from one's sad confinement.

One has to realise the four Aryan *satyas*, but one also has to see the *dharma* for oneself—just as the Tathāgata did (hence his name). The two concepts, as we saw, are not identical but they do form an old pair of twins.

Apparently the canonical sources do not know *kāraṇa* in the sense of "ultimate cause of the world". But there can hardly be any doubt that *dharma* in the sense of *pratītyasamutpāda* was intended (in the *logion* cited above) to identify the ultimate cause and its function. Things come about in a certain way, in a strict temporal succession. Gautama himself must have felt that he had thereby had the final say in an old and long debate on causality.

It does not surprise us that Buddhist sources occasionally identify *dharma* with Brahman. To see *dharma*—*dṛṣṭe dharme*, to have understood causality [27] and to know Brahman is to understand the ultimate cause of the world. It does make sense when the Buddha says, referring to himself, that Brahmabhūta is an *adhivacana* for Tathāgata.

Now and then *dharmacakra* and *brahmacakra* are used as synonyms, and in such

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cases *cakra* would seem to mean "cyclic causality". Likewise in the celebrated image of *saṃsāracakra*, or *saṃsāramaṇḍala* [28].

The Middle Path

The old formula is well-known:

> *ayaṃ kho sā bhikkhave majjhimā paṭipadā tathāgatena abhisambuddhā, cakkhukaraṇī, ñāṇakaraṇī, upasamāya, abhiññāya, sambodhāya, nibbānāya saṃvattati* ... [29]

> Dear monks! (I), the Tathāgata, have discovered that this is the Middle Path that creates vision, that creates knowledge—it leads to peace, to full knowledge, to awakening, to Nirvana ... .

The Middle Path discovered by the one who has actually followed it—this seems to be the meaning of the term Tathāgata (also used by non-Buddhists in a similar context)—leads to *nirvāṇa*. Other terms with the same denotation, but not with the same connotation, for *nirvāṇa* are given (there may be some still obscure historical reasons for this). The two terms *paṭipadā* and *magga* seem to be interchangeable synonyms.

Tathāgata could also have said that he had followed ("gone") the Brahmapatha, the Brahmayāna, that he was now Brahmabhūta, that he had lived the Brahmacarya, etc., to much the same effect.

It is true that the ambiguity of *brahma-* in compounds (deliberately meaningful in some cases, see below) can render it doubtful whether Brahman (n.) or Brahmā (m.) is actually meant. But I suppose we can be fairly sure that the Buddha would not (under normal circumstances) want to identify himself with the hilarious Brahmā who in the canon is depicted as *issara, kattā, nimmātā, abhibhū, pitā bhūtabhavyānam*, etc. (see CPD II, p. 318) [30].

He—Brahmā—is *not* the one Tathāgata has in mind when he refers to himself as *brahmabhūta*. Nor does he advise others to follow a path that leads to the comical creator Brahmā.

Therefore, when Tathāgata (subs. adj.!) indicates a path to *nirvāṇa*, the place of enlightened serenity, he points to Brahman. He might—as did the author of the *Gītā* (2.72)—have coined the term *brahma-nirvāṇa* for this; but for various reasons he did not. The main reason would be that he, as a reformer (not as a revolutionary) would have felt the need for a new term for an old concept, now contrite. The word Brahman had been so abused in his days. This is especially clear from several texts in the DN.

But if Tathāgata pointed out a path avoiding extremes (*anta*)—also those of *sat/ śāśvata* and *asat/uccheda*—to Brahman, why did he not, being so concerned with RV 10.129 as we have seen he was, also speak of the newly discovered path as leading to *tad ekam*? This is, if I may say so, a good question.

In fact, he probably did. I have already pointed out a few canonical references to *ekatvam* (above), and if one consults the compounds with *eka-* in the CPD there are more. There are numerous canonical references to an *ekāyana-magga* invariably said to lead to *nirvāṇa*. Instead of translating (as the CPD does) *ekāyana* with "single (= unique) road, for one person"—a translation in direct conflict with the fact that it is *eight*-fold and to be followed by *many*—it is obviously more natural simply to translate: the path that leads to the One, viz. *nirvāṇa*. Likewise, when the *dharma* is said to leave *ekarasa*, viz. *vimuktirasa*, it does not really mean "a single taste", but rather

"the taste of the One". And in an old phrase such as *sammāsambuddhena ekadhammo akkhāto* (CPD, s.v. *eka-dhamma*) it is surely absurd to translate *ekadhamma* as "one single thing"—as if the fully enlightened Buddha had nothing else to say! It makes sense to say that the Buddha has expounded the Dharma that is (or is about) the One. Terms like *ekī-bhāva*, *ekī-bhūta*, *ekodibhūta*, *ekaggabhūta*, etc. may well deserve revision in this new perspective.

The Tree of Brahman

The author of RV 10.129, to be sure, did not identify *tad ekam* with Brahman—at least not in plain words. But later sources invariably do so as we have seen. A clear case is *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* XI.2.3.1:

> *Brahma vai idam agre āsīt, tad devān asrjata.*

This, in the beginning, was Brahman, it created the gods.

And XIV.8.6.1:

> *āpaḥ evedam agre āsuḥ, tāḥ āpas satyam asrjanta, satyaṃ Brahma, Brahma Prajāpatiṃ, Prajāpatir devān.*

The waters, in the beginning, was This. These waters created Truth; Truth (created) Brahman, Brahman Prajāpati (= Brahmā), Prajāpati (created) the gods.

Brahman is also imagined as the Cosmic Tree. The first reference is perhaps RV 1.24.7, *q.v.* Later on RV 10.81.4 asks:

> *kiṃ svid vánaṃ ká u sá vṛkṣá āsa*
> *yáto dyávāpṛthivī niṣṭatakṣúḥ?*

Which forest was it, which tree was it, from which they carved out heaven and earth?—The reply is given in *Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa* II. 8.9.6: *Brahma vanaṃ, Brahma sa vṛkṣa āsīt*. Brahman was the forest, Brahman was the tree.

The simile, as known, recurs in *Kaṭha-Up.* VI.1–4; *Śvetāśvatara-Up.* III. 7–9, and, based on these sources, in the *Gītā* 15. 1–3. As *avyayam* (= *amṛtam*) the tree is Brahman; but to the extent that the tree of Brahman is also *saṃsāra* one should "cut it down".

There is also a Buddhist version of this tree (e.g. pointed out by Zaehner, *Gītā*, p. 361) viz. *Saṃyutta* IV, pp. 160–161. Here the point is that the fig-tree, when cut with an axe, lets its sap (*kṣīra*) flow out when it is young and tender, but not when dry, sapless and past its season. Likewise, a monk should not give rise to *rāga, dosa* and *moha*.

Much more interesting here is the technical term *skandha*, which can mean the trunk, stem or branching of a tree. This brings us to the celebrated *duḥkhaskandha*, the net outcome of causality. The world, individual existence, *loka*, or *duḥkham* is identified with the five *upādāna-skandhas*. There are a few Vedic occurrences of the related *skandhas* (n.) (not *skandha*) in the sense of the branching top or crown of a tree (cf. MW, p. 1256), or "Verästelung des Baumes", as H. Grassmann renders it in his *Wörterbuch zum Rig-Veda* (p. 1584). So most likely *duḥkhaskandha* does not mean "mass of suffering", but rather "the branching that is *duḥkham*".

Since, as said, the five *skandhas*, the *duḥkhaskandha*, *loka*, *(idaṃ) sarvam*, and

duḥkham have the same denotation in the oldest Buddhist sources it is very tempting to suggest that Gautama knew the image of the Cosmic Tree when he introduced the five *skandhas* to identify *duḥkham*. This also suggests, if true, that in his times, the image of *duḥkham*, having to do with flowing, may already have been somewhat faded.

The usual translation of *upādānaskandhas*, as "the (five) groups of grasping" strikes me as unsatisfactory, for the simple reason that there is no question of the *skandhas* themselves grasping anything or being grasped by anyone or anything. What is meant is rather the material and temporal manifestation, basis or substratum (as wood for fire). The term is cognate to *upadi/upādhi*, *upādāya*, etc. and it is thus easily intelligible why the ancient sources also distinguish between two kinds of *nirvāṇa*, one which still has a basis left in the *skandhas* (*sopadhiśeṣa*) and one which is no longer manifest in the *skandhas* (*nirupadhiśeṣa-*). It is also obvious why "everything", namely the *skandhas*,etc., is said to be "on fire", and why the *skandhas* are considered impermanent and without a self. It is not that the Buddha denied an *ātman* in the sense of Brahman. (The term *ātman* in the sense of "living soul" may be related to RV 10.129.2c.) Brahman, or *nirvāṇa*, is never (or only rhetorically) said to lack any *ātman*, it is only everything that is manifest that lacks any *ātman*, being, of course, subject to the law of *pratītyasamutpāda*.

The author of *Dhammapada* 283 was surely thinking of the Tree of Brahman when he wrote:

> *vanaṃ chindatha, mā rukkhaṃ, vanato jāyati bhayaṃ*
> *chetvā vanaṃ vanathañ ca nibbanā hotha bhikkhavo*

> Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 148: "Cut down the (whole) forest, not the tree (only); danger comes out of the forest. Having cut down both the forest and desire, o mendicants, do you attain freedom." And Fausbøll, p. 65, had problems: *Cupiditatem (vana i.e. cupiditas s. silva) exstirpate, non arborem (dico), e cupiditate oritur metus; cupiditate vel minima exstirpata (miseriis) liberati estote, o mendici.*

Of course *vana* (n.) here, as always, means forest, namely that of *saṃsāra*. (It has nothing to do with Vedic *vanas*, lust, which would spoil the image.) Likewise *Thera-Gāthā* 90 (= 120) speaks of the five *skandhas* being, when fully understood, "cut off from their root" (*chinnamūlaka*). At that point there is the end of *jātisaṃsāra* (ibid.).

So Gautama's theory of the *skandhas* had at its root, if one may say so, the Tree of Brahman.

The Bhagavat Myth

So Brahman had two forms (*rūpa*), an immortal and a bodiless, and a mortal and bodily: the One was transcendent *and* immanent. There was often a good reason for leaving it *sub judice*, in compounds, whether the reference is to Brahman (n.) or to Brahmā (m.).

This notion was adopted by the Śramaṇa movements in opposition to established Brahmanism. The myth of Bhagavat was created.

Like Brahman a Bhagavat invariably has *two* forms (*rūpa*, *kāya*, etc.). Bhagavat became a technical term used by any creed to honour the more or less historical individual who had propounded anew an old Dharma. As a rule a Bhagavat has many predecessors. He is a *homo divinus*. It is not just later on, in Mahāyāna, that a

distinction is made between the *rūpa-* and *dharmakāya* of the Buddha. The distinction between the two forms is inherent from the very beginning in the concept of Bhagavat. It applies to the Buddha, to Mahāvīra, to Kṛṣṇa (BG 9.11), i.e. Viṣṇu, Śiva etc. A Bhagavat, by definition, is the object of *bhakti* [31]. The reason for this *bhakti* is invariably that a Bhagavat by way of *māyā* has let himself be incarnated in a mortal and physical frame in order to *teach* a path to the One to his devotees.

A Bhagavat, by definition, also teaches a *double dharma*. Kṛṣṇa spoke of an old *dvividhā niṣṭhā* (BG 3.3): one kind of yoga that had to do with *jñāna*, another that had to do with *karma*. Virtually all other Indian philosophers make a similar distinction, though naturally using their own terminology (*saṃjñābheda*) [32].

In the old canonical Buddhist formula Tathāgata is described as *vidyā-caraṇa-sampanna*, in full possession of *vidyā* and *caraṇa* [33]. The distinction between intellectual and moral perfection in a Bhagavat is not only common to all kinds of Bhagavatism, as said, but can also be seen as a reply to the old question of RV 10.129.6:

> *kó addhā veda, ká ihá prá vocat   kúta ājātā kúta iyáṃ visṛṣṭiḥ*

> Who knows truly? Who shall here declare, whence it has been produced, whence is this creation? (Better than creation for *virṣṭi*, is, of course, *effusio, ejaculatio (seminis)*.)

A Bhagavat was one who knew the answer, he deserves *bhakti* for telling us which path to follow in order that one may discover for oneself what he himself had discovered—and others before him.

That Gautama, Mahāvīra, Kṛṣṇa, etc., were considered Bhagavats by their adherents is a fact, but this does not at all mean that the *historical* Gautama, etc., considered themselves to be Bhagavats. Gautama may have referred to himself as Tathāgata and Buddha, but did he also refer to himself as Bhagavat [34]?

The Indian myth of a Bhagavat—God as a human preacher—is, from a phenomenological point of view, to be found in the myth of Jesus as Christ. We say Jesus Christ, just as the Buddhist texts say Buddho Bhagavān. We forget the *as*, and thus we—if we are not historians—forget the distinction between history and myth. But *mundus vult decipi!*

Jesus *as* Christ, however, is another story, i.e. a myth. I am sure that future research will also make it a very *long* story!

The Formation of *Tattvam*

We have seen that the concept of a double Brahman/Bhagavat symbolises the same "unity in everything", that makes it rather easy to understand why there is no absolute difference between *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*. One distinction has to do with "persons", another with "principles".

In his *Yuktiṣaṣṭikā* 5-6, Nāgārjuna, a learned Sanskritist with an extensive knowledge of Buddhist as well as Brahmanical lore, wrote:

> *saṃsāraṃ caiva nirvāṇaṃ manyante 'tattvadarśinaḥ /*
> *na saṃsāraṃ na nirvāṇaṃ manyante tattvadarśinaḥ //*
> *nirvāṇaṃ ca bhavaś caiva dvayam etan na vidyate /*
> *parijñānaṃ bhavasyaiva nirvāṇam iti kathyate //*

Those who do not see reality (*tattva*) believe in Saṃsāra and Nirvāṇa (but) those who see reality (*tattva*) believe neither in Saṃsāra nor Nirvāṇa. Existence (*bhava*) and Nirvāṇa—these two are not (really) to be found (since) Nirvāṇa (may be) defined as the thorough knowledge of existence. (From *Nagarjuniana*, p. 105.)

So, in the perspective of *tattvadarśana/parijñāna* the distinction between *saṃsāra* (*bhava*) and *nirvāṇa*—the duality, *dvaya*—is not valid. In this there is nothing new. But what is new is the word *tattvam*, which in later literature is extremely common, especially in compounds such as *tattvajñāna*, *tattvadarśana* and the like.

But what does *tattvam* really mean? What does one see or know when one sees or knows *tattvam*? According to the standard dictionaries and translations, it means "that-ness", truth, reality. The word, to be sure, is not Vedic.

I think there are at least *two* good reasons to reject this "etymology", "that-ness".

First of all, if *tat-tvam* means "that-ness" we should ask: "that-ness" of *what*? The context requires a genitive to express the possessive relationship. It is not clear what "that" is, and what "that" is said to be. There is no such relationship when we speak of *tattvajñāna*, *tattvadarśana*, etc.

Secondly, the word *tattvam* apparently does not occur in the early sources. It is not Vedic and if I am not mistaken it is not to be found in the early canonical texts of Buddhism and Jainism. This is significant.

We must ask *when* the term *tattvam* was introduced, *why*, *where* and exactly in *what* sense.

As far as I can see the word first occurs in *later* Upaniṣads such as *Muṇḍaka* (1), *Kaṭha* (2), *Śvetāśvatara* (3), and *Maitrāyaṇī* (4). The context invariably presumes that the reader is already familiar with the meaning of the term. A translation such as "that-ness" would not make any sense to the reader in any of these early contexts.

These later Upaniṣads presuppose knowledge of the early *Chāndogya* and I think it is here we have to look for the clue to the formation of *tat-tvam*. Here (VI.8.7; 9.4; 10.3; 13.3; 15.3; 16.3) we find the celebrated phrase:

> *sa ya eṣo 'ṇimaitadātmyam idaṃ sarvaṃ tat satyam, sa ātmā, tat tvam asi Śvetaketo iti; bhūya eva mā bhagavān vijñāpayatv iti.*
>
> Patrick Olivelle, p. 152: "The finest essence here—that constitutes the self of this whole world; that is the truth; that is the self (*ātman*). And that's how you are, Śvetaketu.—Sir, teach me more."

Here a Bhagavat identifies micro- and macrocosm by saying that *tat* is one with *tvam*, that object and subject are somehow not really different. This great passage, repeated six times, would have been so familiar to the reader of the later Upaniṣads that it would have been immediately obvious that *tattvam* was formed on the basis of *tat tvam asi*. It thus means *identity*, namely the identity of *tat* and *tvam*, what in Buddhist terminology becomes *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*. There is no *dvaya* between the two in *tattvam*, i.e. when one, in one's heart (*hṛdi*) knows the two as one, the One.

As we can see from other compounds such as *ahaṃkāra*, *mamakāra*, *ahamahamikā*, *idaṃpratyayatā*, etc., it was not at all uncommon in those days and in those circles to use pronouns for the formation of a substantive with a specific philosophical meaning.

So *tattvam* is a synonym of *ekatvam* and *advayam*. It simply means *identity*, and it was introduced into Buddhism by brahmans who adopted it from their own tradition. By extension, the meaning "identity" is still apparent in later compounds such as

tattvānyatva, a synonym of *ekatvānyatva*. Even here it does not mean "that-ness", truth or reality, but identity, unity (as opposed to duality, difference). It is a new word for the old *ekatvam*, but the connotation is a bit different because *ekatvam* has a somewhat wider range of meaning. The word *tattvam* primarily belongs to an epistemological context, the word *ekatvam* to an ontological (metaphysical).

So when later Buddhist *ācāryas*, writing is Sanskrit, used the term *tattvam*, they introduced a new *word* without canonical authorisation. But the *idea* was not new [35].

Likewise, when Mahāyāna identified *tattvam* with *śūnyatā* it was in a way quite conservative. According to RV 10.129.3, in the beginning *tad ekam* was covered with the void (*tuchya*). So everything was void, or empty, all along. Emptiness is the "ultimate" truth. There is also a "relative" truth, one of the terms for which is *saṃvṛti-satyam*. Buddhist authors who wrote in Sanskrit understood *saṃvṛti* (from *sam* and the root *vṛ*) as meaning "completely covering", and the like. According to RV 10.129.3, in the beginning *tad ekam* was covered (*apihitam*) by the void. Thus at least one fundamental aspect of the Mahāyāna *satyadvaya-vibhāga* can be traced back to RV 10.129.3 [36].

In a previous paper, written from an entirely different point of view, I came to the conclusion (not without being hypothetical) that "pre-canonical" or "original" Buddhism, that of Gautama, conceived *nirvāṇa* as a *place*, literally speaking, that a yogin could travel to [37]. I did not then recognise the enormous influence of the Vedic and Brahmanical tradition on early Buddhism. It is now becoming more and more clear that cosmogonic speculations and Vedic exegesis were vital and formative for Gautama's way of thinking. He was concerned with *tad ekam* beyond *sat* and *asat*. Not being limited by time and space it could be "gone to" by yogic cognition.

This is not to say that (early) Buddhism is Brahmanism.

On four major points the Buddhists—and the Jains—rejected Brahmanism. These four points are summed up in a historically accurate way by Dharmakīrti in the final verse of the first chapter of his *Pramāṇavārtika* (340):

> *vedaprāmāṇyaṃ kasyacit kartṛvādaḥ*
> *snāne dharmecchā jātivādāvalepaḥ / ...* [38]

The authority of the Veda, the doctrine of a Creator of the world, the conviction that rituals can cause moral purity, and the haughtiness based on claims of birth—on these points Buddhism has always rejected Brahmanism. Likewise, according to an earlier and very well-informed source—the *Viśeṣastava* (73) of Udbhaṭasiddhasvāmin—people say that the Buddhists "hate the gods, the brahmans and the Veda" [39].

Apart from that ancient Indian Buddhism should be seen as reformed Brahmanism.

If he were to address himself to a modern Jewish, Christian or Moslem audience—i.e. to the "Abrahamic religions"—an ancient Indian Buddhist *ācārya* would have to admit that he did not like the Bible (Koran), the priesthood, their rituals and the God they hail as the Creator [40].

Brahmayoni and Tathāgatagarbha

Ideas expressed by the terms *yoni* and *garbha* played a significant role in Brahmanism as well as in Buddhism.

Hiraṇyagarbha is known to us from RV 10.121 and several other versions. In the beginning (*agre*), Brahman (so we assume) appeared as Brahmā, an embryo of gold. He, as a *garbha*, was carried by the primeval waters, and he is considered to be the only

(*eka*) father (*pati*), the only king (*rāja*), the only god (*deva*) of the entire world. He is, in brief, Prajāpati (10.121.10). The golden embryo is the principle of life.

It is not explicitly stated why the *garbha* is gold(en), but if we can rely, e.g. on *Chāndogya-Up.* III.19.1, there is a "report" to the effect that the sun is Brahman: *ādityo brahmety ādeśaḥ*. Since the sun is often said to have "golden hands", there is obviously no problem in relating gold(en) to the sun and its rays (or the golden flames of fire). This is consistent with the fact that Hiraṇyagarbha is said to support (not "create") the earth, and the sky etc., but *not* the sun. So, in sum, the Sun, or Brahman, places its *garbha*, or Brahmā (as Prajāpati) in the primeval waters. This, then, is the first cause of *viśva, bhūta, jagat*, etc.

The same idea is found in RV 10.82, where we read that the primeval waters carry (again *dhā-*) the first *garbha* which, again, is fixed in "the navel of the unborn", *ajasya nābhāv adhi ... arpitam* (6), i.e. as the commentators correctly explain, the unmanifest Brahman.

So somehow Brahman is responsible for the initial *garbha*—"king Sun".

Once we think of *garbha* we must also think of *yoni*. This is what already the author of RV 1.164.33 did:

> *dyaúr me pitá janitá nābhir átra   bándhur me mātá pṛthivī mahíyám/*
> *uttānáyos camúvor yónir antár   átrā pitá duhitúr gárbham ādhāt//*

> The sky is my father, (my) progenitor; here (is my) navel, my friend. The great earth is my mother. Between these two extended "boards" is the *yoni* ("space", *antarikṣa*, acc. to Sāyaṇa). Here (in the *yoni*) my Father (or Sun: *ādityo dyaur ucyate*, Sāyaṇa) places the *garbha* (*vṛṣṭyudakalakṣaṇa*, Sāyaṇa) of his daughter (the earth, Sāyaṇa, not convincing).

Though obscure in details the poet seems to have an idea of a *yoni* between the sky and the earth. In this, the sun (= Brahman?) places a *garbha* which somehow has to do with the fluid, probably, once more, the primeval waters.

Vedic speculations continued in this direction and eventually lead to the concept of Brahmayoni. Thus *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Up.* I.4.11 says: *saiṣā kṣatrasya yonir yad brahma*, etc.

The next passage of interest to us would be *Muṇḍaka-Up.* III. 1–3. It alludes to the celebrated image of the two birds on the same tree—also RV 1.164.20—and concludes: *yadā paśyaḥ paśyate rukmavarṇaṃ kartāram īśaṃ puruṣaṃ brahmayonim ... .*

Here one has to see the golden *puruṣa* which is said, *inter alia*, to be (or have) *brahmayoni*.

In *Śvetāśvatara-Up.* V.6 Brahmā is said to know something *gūḍha* as *brahmayoni*. A deva, or bhagavat, who is *eka*, is said to be the Lord of *yoni*—*yonīśa*. He is the *paśya*, the "seer", a *mahātman* (ibid.).

Finally, based on these passages, we find Kṛṣṇa, the *puruṣottama*, identifying himself with the one who places a *garbha* in the *yoni* of Brahman (BG 14.3):

> *mama yónir mahad brahma tasmin garbhaṃ dadhāmy aham/*
> *sambhavaḥ sarvabhūtānāṃ tato bhavati Bhārata//*

> W.J. Johnson (1994) *The Bhagavad Gīta* (Oxford) p. 61, renders: "Great Brahman is my womb, in it I place the embryo; the origin of all creatures derives from that, Bharata".

There is, of course, no reason here (e.g. with Garbe and Böhtlingk) [41] to suppose a

misuse of the word brahman. The concept of *brahmayoni*, as we have seen, is very old. The author of the *Gītā* goes on (BG 14.4):

sarvayoniṣu Kaunteya mūrtayaḥ saṃbhavanti yāḥ/
tāsāṃ brahma mahad yonir ahaṃ bījapradaḥ pitā//

Johnson, again: "Whatever forms are produced in any wombs, Son of Kunti, Brahman is their great womb and I am the seed-giving father".

The idea of "something" (Brahman) placing a *garbha* of some sort surrounded by water in a *yoni* is very old (and embryologically quite natural and modern, of course). In the early period the "father" of the *garbha* seems to have been Brahman in the sense of the Sun (m.)—*ādityo brahmety ādeśaḥ*.

But later on theistic movements tended to identify the "father" with a *puruṣa*, one of which was Kṛṣṇa. Once the first principle was made masculine, Brahman tended to turn from neuter to feminine. To begin with Brahman was a *yoni* of its own, certainly not the *yoni* of some *puruṣa*. It was now a *puruṣa* who placed a *garbha* in Brahman. The "child", though, was still Brahmā, also known as Hiraṇyagarbha, Prajāpati, etc.

The idea was a great one, and, as one would expect, the Buddhists eventually took it up, *mutatis mutandis*, just as they had identified the two bodies of the Buddha with the two forms of Brahman.

In some Mahāyāna scriptures such as the *Śrīmālādevīsūtra*, etc. [42], a distinction is made between the Dharmakāya and the Tathāgatagarbha of the Bhagavat. The former is, of course, pure, profound etc., the latter not yet free from defilement.

There is really nothing surprising or "mystical" in this idea. It is a parallel to the distinction between *nirvāṇa* and *saṃsāra*. In a sense, naturally, the Tathāgatagarbha, as any embryo, is impure, in another, since it *is*, after all, the *garbha* of the pure body of a Tathāgata, it is pure. It must be. It is perfectly understandable why the sources therefore identify Tathāgatagarbha with "suffering" and Dharmakāya with "the cessation of suffering". It is also a fundamental idea that "all living beings have a tathāgatagarbha".

It does not now come as a surprise to us that the tathāgatagarbha is also the *ratnagotra*, i.e. the *gotra* of *ratnatraya*. Among the any synonyms of *gotra* we find, e.g. *hetu*, *bīja*, *yoni* and *garbha*. The terms are already familiar to us by now.

There are several passages to the effect that *adhimukti* is symbolized as *bīja*, that *prajñā* is the mother, that *dhyāna* is *garbha*, and *karuṇā* the nurse of the "sons" of the Munis [43].

This, then, is a spiritual metaphor borrowed from what was, to begin with, an attempt to explain the origin of the world in physiological, or embryological, terms.

Understandably, as if writing *in usum delphini*, the Buddhists usually would avoid terms such as *yoni* (in the sense of *pudendum muliebre*) and *vajra* (in the sense of *liṅga*).

But not invariably so! In some texts—appropriately shelved as *guhya*—we read that Bhagavat abides in *sarvatathāgatakāya-vākcittahṛdayavajrayoṣidbhageṣu*, and the like [44]. What *vajra* and *yoṣidbhaga* here mean is in no need of being spelled out: *liṅga* and *yoni*. Of course, the *vajrācāryas* would claim that we have to take this in a spiritual, not in a literal sense. Likewise, they would insist, when we speak of the union of Prajñā and Upāya, the female and the male principle: the father and the mother of the bodhisattvas. The image is extremely common in Mahāyāna as well as in Vajrayāna [45].

Already in the earliest sources, Bhagavat, through his *gotra*, is hailed as *ādityabandhu*,

"kinsman of the sun" (Cf. CPD II, p. 58 for ref.). Are we justified in associating this epithet with the ādeśa (quoted above): ādityo brahmeti?

The sun is located in space (antarikṣa) and it is therefore obvious that Brahman is also closely associated with ākāśa (a term not yet found in RV). Later on, whether it is Brahman or Tathāgata (tathāgatadhātu, nirvāṇa, etc.) that has to be illustrated, the most common concept of comparison is that of ākāśa (the tertium comparationis being unchangeability, purity, etc.) [46].

In BG 13.32, for instance, the paramātman is illustrated thus:

yathā sarvagataṃ saukṣmyād ākāśaṃ nopalipyate/
sarvatrāvasthito dehe tathātmā nopalipyate//

Johnson, p. 59: "Just as the all-pervading ether is not polluted because of its subtlety, so the self, although it is present in every body, is not polluted".

As first pointed out by V.V. Gokhale, Ratnagotravibhāga 52 speaks about the tathāgatadhātu in identical terms:

yathā sarvagataṃ saukṣmyād ākāśaṃ nopalipyate/
sarvatrāvasthitaḥ sattve tathāyaṃ nopalipyate//

Jikido Takasaki (1966) A Study on the Ratnagotravibhāga (Uttaratantra) (Roma) p. 235: "Just as space, being all-pervading, cannot be polluted because of its subtle nature; similarly, abiding everywhere among living beings, this (essence) remains unpolluted (by defilements)".

To this extent the "absolute" in Buddhism and Brahmanism is identical. Like space, nirvāṇa is somehow present everywhere without "residing" anywhere. As such it is as real and pure as can be but virtually impossible to grasp.

We should not misunderstand the term yoni. Passages such as RV 1.164.33 (quoted above) suggest that it, too, means (confined) space, an opening between two extended "boards".

So a yoni is not merely conceived, at an early date, as a locus where something unborn is born, but also as a confinement. It is this sentiment of painful confinement that also—as we have seen—finds expression in terms such as duḥkha and upādhi.

This Lebensgefühl, this Drang for Lebensraum, is already so characteristic of the Vedic thinkers and it is still very much alive in later Indian philosphers' quest for mokṣa—release from the pains—physical as well as mental—of confinement.

In Brahmanism as well as in Buddhism ākāśa is used as a dṛṣṭānta of something uncreated, unbound and unconfined.

A few examples of this may be quoted here from Acintyastava 37–39:

bhāvābhāvadvayātītam anatītam ca kutra cit/
na ca jñānaṃ na ca jñeyaṃ na cāsti na ca nāsti yat//
yan na caikaṃ na cānekaṃ nobhayaṃ na ca nobhayam/
anālayam athāvyaktam acintyam anidarśanam//
yan nodeti na ca vyeti nocchedi na ca śāśvatam/
tad ākāśapratīkāśaṃ nākṣarajñānagocaram// [47]

Nāgārjuniana, p. 153: "(That which) has transcended the duality of being and non-being without, however, having transcended anything at all; that which is not knowledge or knowable, not existent nor non-existent, not one nor many, not both nor neither; (that which is) without foundation, unmani-

fest, inconceivable, incomparable; that which arises not, disappears not, is not to be annihilated and is not permanent, *that* is (Reality) which is like space (and) not within the range of words or knowledge (*akṣarajñāna*)".

It is hard to see how the "*tat*"—comparable to *ākāśa*—of the learned Buddhist brahman Nāgārjuna here differs essentially from that of traditional Brahmanism. Space is even beyond cognition. But it is certainly "real".

According to an old *logion*, ascribed to Bhagavat, a *puruṣa-pudgala* consists of six elements (*dhātu*): earth, water, fire, wind, *ākāśa* and *vijñāna* [48].

Another ancient adage, also Buddhist, explains that earth rests on water, water on wind, wind on space (*ākāśa*)—but *ākāśa* itself is unsupported (*apratiṣṭhita, anālambana*) [49]. As such it is comparable to *nirvāṇa*. Similiar ideas are common in the ancient Upaniṣads. That the Buddhists may not accept *ākāśa* conceived as a *bhūta, dravya, bhāva* or *abhāva* does, of course, *not* mean that they reject its "inconceivable" reality.

Brahmanical sources frequently employ the *dṛṣṭānta* of the *ghaṭākāśa* to illustrate the confinement of the individual soul in a body, e.g. *Yājñavalkyasmṛti* 3.143–144:

> *eka eva tu bhūtātmā bhūte bhūte vyavasthitaḥ/*
> *ekadhā bahudhā caiva dṛśyate jalacandravat//*
> *ākāśam ekaṃ hi yathā ghaṭādiṣu pṛthag bhaved/*
> *tathātmaiko hy anekastho jalādhareṣv ivāṃśumān//* [50]

> The real self is one only; it is present in each and every being. It is (seen) in one form and it is (seen) in many forms; it is thus seen to be like the moon (reflected) in (many) ponds ... . Just as one (and the same) space is seen to be apart in pots etc., thus the one self is present in many (forms), just as the sun is (seen) in (many) ponds.

One vast space and many tiny ones, as it were: once again, there is no real difference between *nirvāṇa* and *saṃsāra*.

With certain reservations—due to their peculiar stand on the question of *ātman*—even the Buddhists could not reject the appropriateness of the old *ākāśadṛṣṭānta*.

Ātman as *Sākṣin* and *Nātha*

We are often told that the Buddha/Gautama did not accept the existence of a soul, a self, an *ātman*. But, of course, the matter is not all that simple.

The Buddhist sources—early as well as late—agree that of *ātman* one cannot really say *asti* or *nāsti* (or *asti* and *nāsti*, or neither *asti* nor *nāsti*: the *catuṣkoṭi*). This is well-known and not even unique for the Buddha. The idea of *ātman* as a real "subject" that cannot be described is also known to Yājñavalkya, e.g. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Up.* IV.2.4:

> *sa eṣa neti nety ātmā, agrahyo na hi gṛhyate, aśīryo na hi śīryate, asaṅgo na hi sajjate, asito na vyathate, na riṣyati ... .*

> Olivelle, p. 67: "About this self (*ātman*), one can only say 'not-, not-,'. He is ungraspable, for he cannot be grasped. He is undecaying, for he is not subject to decay. He has nothing sticking to him, for he does not stick to anything. He is not bound; yet he neither trembles in fear nor suffers injury."

This does not prevent Yājñavalkya from being more positive, e.g. IV.4.22:

> *sa vā eṣa mahān aja ātmā yo 'yaṃ vijñānamayaḥ prāṇeṣu; ya eṣo 'ntarhṛdaya*

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ākāśas tasmiñ chete sarvasya vaśī sarvasyeśānaḥ sarvasyādhipatiḥ ... etam eva viditvā munir bhavati ... ,

and IV.4.23:

tasmād evaṃvic, chānto dānta uparatas titikṣuḥ samāhito bhūtvātmany evātmānaṃ paśyati ... .

Olivelle, p. 67: "This immense, unborn self is none other than the one consisting of perception here among the vital functions (*prāṇa*). There, in that space within the heart, he lies—the controller of all, the lord of all, the ruler of all! ... . It is he, on knowing whom, a man becomes a sage. " ... "A man who knows this, therefore, becomes calm, composed, cool, patient, and collected. He sees the self (*ātman*) in just himself (*ātman*) and all things as the self."

So, in brief, the *ātman* is not "something" that can be conceived and described, but it can certainly be "seen in itself", and the place where this Lord can be seen is in the *ākāśa* within the heart.

Yājñavalkya's vision, then, seems to be but an echo of RV 10.129.7:

yó asyādhyakṣaḥ paramé vioman so aṅgá veda yádi vā ná véda

There is a Lord who rules (*adhipati*) and who is an eyewitness. His place is in the highest heaven, or the space within the heart.

It can be argued, I think, that the Buddha/Gautama entertained a similar view—which is *no* view—about *ātman*. (A *dṛṣṭi*, then, is not a "wrong" view, but a view, a dogmatic *stare*, that wrongly has an object.)

It is true that the sources relate that the Buddha did not accept that the *ātman* could in any way be related to or identified with *sarvam*, i.e. the five *skandhas*, etc., or anything that could be grasped. It is also true that he would not accept the existence of a soul in the sense of a *jantu, sattva, pudgala, prāṇin, jīva, manuja, mānava, strī, pumān, napuṃsaka*, etc., *aham, mama*, etc. [51]. And it is true that he would confirm the thesis: *ṣaḍdhātur ayaṃ puruṣapudgalaḥ*—with no room for any independent *ātman*.

But the fact that the Buddha rejected various concepts of an *ātman*—this is clear—does not mean that he rejected *all* notions of an *ātman*.

As far as I can see the ancient Buddhist sources never deny the *ātman* in the sense of *nātha* and *sākṣin*, ruler and witness. And, if I am not mistaken, they thereby shared a view of *ātman* with virtually all other schools who entertained some notion of an *ātman* at all.

About *ātman* as *nātha* and *sākṣin* we not only have *Dhammapada* 160 (q.v.) but also the verses quoted, e.g. *Prasannapadā* (p. 354):

ātmā hi ātmano nāthaḥ (ko nu nāthaḥ) paro bhavet/
ātmanā hi sudāntena svargaṃ prāpnoti paṇḍitaḥ//
ātmā hi ātmano nāthaḥ (ko nu nāthaḥ) paro bhavet/
ātmā hi ātmanaḥ sākṣī kṛtasyāpakṛtasya ca// [52]

The self is, of course, the lord of the self. Which other lord could there be? With a self that is well disciplined, a sage naturally attains heaven. The self is, of course, the lord of the self. Which other lord could there be? The self is, of course, the witness of the self, and also of a (good) deed and a mischievous deed.

Manu 8.84 also expresses this general and obvious (*hi*) idea:
ātmaiva hy ātmanah sākṣī gatir ātmā tathātmanaḥ/
māvamamsthāḥ svam ātmānam nṛṇāṃ sākṣiṇam uttamam//

Arthur Goke Burnell (1884) *The Ordinances of Manu* (London) p. 191: "For self alone is the witness for self, and self is likewise the refuge of self. Despise not, therefore, (your) own self, the highest witness of men."

One notes the *hi*, here and above: it indicates something obvious, needing no further explanation. The verse from Manu is (as first pointed out by Kern) somehow related to *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* I, p. 149:

n'atthi loke raho nāma pāpakammaṃ pakubbato/
attā te purisa jānāti saccaṃ vā yadi vā musā//
kalyāṇaṃ vata bho sakkhi attānaṃ atimaññasi/
yo santaṃ attanī pāpaṃ attānaṃ parigūhasi//

F.L. Woodward (1932) *The Book of Gradual Sayings*, Vol. 1 (London) p. 132: "Nowhere can any cover up his sin. The self in thee, man! knows what's true or false. Indeed, my friend, thou scorn'st the noble self, thinking to hide the evil self in thee from self who witnessed it ... ."

And the following verses go on describing a *muni* who is *attādhipaka, lokādhipa, dhammādhipa* ... . Here again we have *adhipa(ka)*, a synonym of *nātha/rāja, adhipati*, etc.

In *Śvetāśvatara-Up.* 6.11, the highest self is said to be *karmādhyakṣaḥ* and *sākṣin*; in BG 9.18 it is said to be *prabhuḥ, sākṣin* etc., and significantly, *śaraṇam* (like the Bhagavat and Vedic gods).

From these passages I cannot but conclude that ancient Buddhism shared the common Brahmanical belief (with Vedic roots) in an *ātman* in the sense of *nātha/adhipa (ti/ka)* and *sākṣin/adhyakṣa*. (Ancient or modern attempts to allegorise these canonical passages are, therefore, unhistorical.) As a Lord, the *ātman* was free to supervise and guide itself by itself.

As said, I think the *hi* is significant. It was obvious—at least to all true Brahmans—that the *ātman* was a *nātha* and a *sākṣin*, and therefore in no need of much discussion. (Likewise, fundamental "facts" such as *karma* and *mokṣa* are matters of universal consensus among philosophers, something that only a *nāstika* would deny.)

A consideration of the canonical usage of *sākṣāt-kṛ-* and *sākṣātkriyā*, to see with one's own eyes, seeing face to face, will lead us to the same conclusion. The term is typically used to indicate the Buddha's personal *experience* of *nirvāṇa* (see ref. PED). It is a sort of intuition, the reality of which is never denied or questioned. It is also something that a real *muni*—such as Yājñavalkya—prefers to treat with Aryan *tūṣṇīṃbhāva*. This also means that a *muni*, at this stage, does not make the *ātman* the grammatical/logical subject of "seeing". True realisation does not, as we have seen, admit of any duality.

The *ātman* of a *puruṣa*, we were just told (*Aṅguttara* I, p. 149, above) knows *saccaṃ vā yadi vā musā*. (This is *not* something any of the *skandhas* can do!) As such it compares with the Vedic god Varuṇa who also "witnesses men's truth and falshood" [53].

Like the *ātman* Varuṇa is the witness and the Lord in the highest heaven. Varuṇa has in fact several features that make him a sort of precursor to Bhagavat. He sees

everything, he works by means of *māyā*, the other gods follow (*sacante*) his *kratu*, he has *kṣatra*, and he provides *dhī*. The wind serves as his *ātman*.

Bhagavat absorbed several features from the Vedic god Varuṇa just as he included those of Brahman/Brahmā.

The Three Stages of the *Ātman* as *Puruṣa*

Sometimes we find *puruṣa* used in the sense of the "empirical" *ātman*. As such the *puruṣa*, according to Yājñavalkya, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Up.* IV.3.9, has two, or rather three stages:

> *tasya vā etasya puruṣasya dve eva sthāne bhavataḥ: idaṃ ca paralokasthānaṃ ca; sandhyaṃ tṛtīyaṃ svapnasthānam.*

> Olivelle, p. 59: "Now, this person has just two places—this world and the other world. And there is a third, the place of dream where the two meet."

A unique passage in *Dīgha-Nikāya*, I, p. 195, would seem to reflect a similar conception:

> *tayo 'me attapaṭilābhā: oḷāriko manomayo arūpo.*

> There are three modes (or states) of the self, viz. the gross, the mental and immaterial.

Now *pratilābha* is more or less a synonym of *jāti, saṃjāti, avakrānti, abhinirvṛtti* and *prādurbhāva* [54]. So the *ātman* can take the form of something material, as mind, or as something immaterial.

Yājñavalkya would seem to have entertained a similar idea, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Up.* IV.3.7:

> *katama ātmeti—yo 'yaṃ vijñānamayaḥ prāṇeṣu hṛdy antarjyotiḥ puruṣaḥ sa samānaḥ sann ubhau lokāv anusaṃcarati dhyāyatīva lelāyatīva sa hi svapno bhūtvemaṃ lokam atikrāmati mṛtyo rūpāṇi* [55].

> Olivelle, p. 59: "Which self is that?—It is this person—the one that consists of perception among the vital functions (*prāṇa*), the one that is the inner light within the heart. He travels across both worlds, being common to both. Sometimes he reflects, sometimes he flutters, for when he falls asleep he transcends this world, these visible forms of death."

The Buddhist sources, of course, also contrast this *loka* with the beyond, *paraloka*. Very common is the distinction between *kāma-*, *rūpa-*, and *arūpaloka* (or *-dhātu*).

Like the Buddhists Yājñavalkya also speculated about the *ātman* and what it was "made of"; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Up.* IV.4.5:

> *sa vā ayam ātmā brahma, vijñānamayo manomayaḥ prāṇamayaś cakṣurmayah śrotramayaḥ pṛthivīmaya āpomayo vāyumaya ākāśamayas tejomayo 'tejomayaḥ kāmamayo 'kāmamayaḥ krodhamayo 'krodhamayo dharmamayo 'dharmamayaḥ sarvamayaḥ.*

> Olivelle, p. 64; "Clearly, this self is brahman—this self that is made of perception, made of mind, made of sight, made of breath, made of hearing, made of earth, made of water, made of wind, made of space, made of light

and the lightless, made of desire and the desireless, made of anger and the angerless, made of the righteous and the unrighteous; this self that is made of everything."

The details and variants are here of less interest to us. The important thing to notice is that Yājñavalkya as well as Buddha/Gautama agreed that the *ātman* belonged to at least three worlds. They even agreed about at least one of the characteristic terms— *manomaya*—and apparently also about most of the other ideas.

Yājñavalkya ends his discourse (ibid., IV.5.15) with a question: *vijñātāram are kena vijānīyāt?* By means of what (which knowledge) could one know the one who knows? He is wise enough to leave the answer—to you and me!

This is, according to Yājñavalkya, an *anuśāsana* about *amṛtatvam*. Likewise, the Buddhist sources use *deśanā, śāsana, anuśāsana* [56] to describe the Buddha's teaching about *dharma, tattva, nirvāṇa*, that one has to come and see for oneself: *ehipaśyika* it is.

Would the Buddha not have made a fool of himself had he been less reticent about the *ātman?*

The Kingdom Within

According to Luke 17:21, "God's imperial rule is within you"—hardly "right there in your presence", as some modern translators suggest, since Greek ἐντός means *within*, and also since it has just been said that it does not come "so that it can be observed". If it were "right there in your presence" you would certainly be able to observe it, or how?

Greek ἐντός is, of course, related to Sanskrit *antar*, and it is, indeed, a fundamental idea of Brahmanism as well as Buddhism that *ātman*/Brahman/*nirvāṇa* is found *within* the heart. (One could introduce a *locativus veritatis* to that effect!)

Yājñavalkya (ibid., IV.3.7) spoke of the *hṛdy antarjyotiḥ puruṣaḥ,*. In RV 10.129.4 the *kavi*s found the solution to their problem *hṛdi*—in the heart.

For Nāgārjuna—and all other masters of Mahāyāna—the empirical world (*mahābhūtādi*) disappears in emptiness, *śūnyatā* (MK 18.5), in *tattvārthaniṛmaya* RĀ I.99), in *mokṣa* (RĀ I.41), in *vijñāna* (YṢ 34), etc. In his *Ālokamālā* Kambala employs the form *hṛdi, hṛdaye* (or *hṛdayāt*) at least five times to indicate the *locus* where the world arises or ceases [57].

The kingdom within is, in the words of *Chāndogya-Up.*, VIII.1–4, the city of Brahman (*brahmapura*) in the space within the heart. This is, we would say, where micro- and macrocosm meet: it is a remarkable passage—also from a comparative historical point of view:

> *yāvān vā ayam ākāśas tāvān eṣo 'ntarhṛdaya ākāśaḥ. ubhe asmin dyāvāpṛthivī antar eva samāhite. ubhāv agniś ca vāyuś ca sūryācandramāv ubhau vidyun-nakṣatrāṇi yac cāsyehāsti yac ca nāsti sarvaṃ tad asmin samāhitam iti.*

Olivelle, p. 167: "As vast as the space here around us is this space within the heart, and within it are contained both the earth and sky, both fire and wind, both the sun and the moon, both lightning and stars. What belongs here to this space around us, as well as what does not—all that is contained within it."

(Here we also have a key to the understanding of *samādhi*: putting micro- and macrocosm together [58], in con-centration.)

The symbolism of the fortified city (*pura*) of safety quite naturally also appealed to Buddhist imagination. They, too, teach a path that leads to *nirvāṇapura* [59].

The conviction that macrocosm is contained, or concentrated (*samāhita*) in microcosm, that the city of Brahman or *nirvāṇa* is found in the space within the heart, is reflected in various ways in Buddhist texts.

Kambala, for instance, also locates macrocosm in microcosm when he says that the sun, the moon, the sky, the host of stars, the earth, the rivers, the oceans, the quarters and the mountains are but manifestations of *citta* (= *hṛdaya!*); *Ālokamālā* 20:

> *sūryācandramasau vyoma tārācakraṃ vasuṃdharā/*
> *saritsāgaradikśailāś cittasyaitā vibhūtayaḥ//*

This does *not* mean that the sun etc. are unreal creations of mind, but rather that the world is contained in man. They are made of the same stuff, as it were (cf. *manomaya*, *vijñānamaya*, above).

This conception is quite as positive as when, e.g. *Vākyapadīya* 3.7.41 claims:

> *dyauḥ kṣamā vāyur ādityaḥ sāgarāḥ sarito diśaḥ/*
> *antaḥkaraṇatattvasya bhāgā bahir avasthitāḥ//* [60]

> The sky, the earth, the wind, the sun, the oceans, the rivers and the directions
> are but the external parts of the reality of the internal (spiritual) principle.

Understandably, it is in the same locus that the world either appears or disappears. *Udāna* 9 (in F.L. Woodward's translation):

> Where water, earth, fire, air no footing find,
> There shine no stars, no sun is there displayed,
> There glows no moon; no darkness there is seen.
> So when the sage, the brāhmaṇa, by wisdom
> Of his own self hath pierced (unto that truth),
> From form and no-form, pleasure-and-pain he's freed.

This *place* where earth etc. leave no trace behind is also the concern of, e.g. *Dīgha-Nikāya* I, p. 223:

> *viññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ anantaṃ sabbato-pa(b)haṃ*
> *ettha āpo ca paṭhavī tejo vāyo na gādhati*
> *ettha dīghañ ca rassañ ca aṇuṃ thulaṃ subhāsubham*
> *ettha nāmañ ca rūpañ ca asesaṃ uparujjhati*
> *viññāṇassa nirodhena etth' etaṃ uparujjhati* [61]

> Consciousness (the spirit) is invisible, endless and altogether lucid. Here water and earth, fire and wind have no foundation. Here long and short, fine and gross, pure and impure, here name and form are all completely stopped. With the cessation of consciousness it is all stopped here.

The author is not as explicit as he could have been but there can hardly be any doubt that he (Gautama) is here thinking of *nirvāṇa* which is endless etc. like space.

Behind all this is a natural philosophy common to Brahmans and ancient Buddhism alike. Man, in his heart, contains the world. Endless space, endless mind, contains the four elements. The heat and power of the sun brings life to the material embryo flowing in the primeval waters. Thus painful confinement came about. Man, by recognising the

artificiality of the imposed limitations can bring the world back to its original purity and infinity, beyond duality.

It can hardly be denied that there is an unbroken continuity of thought from the Vedic period to that of early Buddhism, and even to the *śūnyatāvāda* of Mahāyāna. Unlimited empty space encompasses everything. All limitations are, therefore, artificial. Somehow limitations come about with the activity of the four elements (*mahābhūta*). A human being consists of the four elements but also of *vijñāna* and *ākāśa*. So it has a share in two worlds. The two worlds converge in the space in the heart of the individual. The door to immortality, the place of escape and release is, therefore, also to be found in the heart of man. Here is the fortified city of Brahman or *nirvāṇa*.

It is here we find the ancient Indian kingdom within.

It is understandable that the mythical figure of the Bhagavat largely replaces the Vedic gods, especially Brahman (not really a god) and Varuṇa. If Brahman is the creative power of the sun and Varuṇa the encompassing space that rules and witnesses everything, then unlimited *ākāśa* must somehow be the end and the beginning of everything that is limited. A Bhagavat, as we have seen, has two bodies, one that is unbounded and unborn like space and one that appears to rule and teach what cannot really be communicated—because it is like space.

So, with the fear of having repeated myself too often, the fundamental idea of the period of Indian thought here under consideration, is that of bringing (by what was known as the technique of yoga in the sense of *samādhi*) macrocosm down into microcosm, in other words: microcosm back to the macrocosm from which it originates. The only place this reduction, identification or release can take place is within the space in the heart which is also mind.

This, I think, is consistent natural philosophy, rather than "religion" or "mysticism".

Modern science (biology), of course, is compatible with these ancient intuitions of the Indian philosophers. In the vastness of space our planet and its inhabitants are extremely insignificant. For millions of years the Earth was a scene of utter desolation. Eventually life began to appear. Ultimately all energy comes from the sun. There is a constant exchange of matter and energy—from earth, water and air to plant, from plant to animal, from animal to animal etc., and back again to earth, water and air. Without solar energy this metabolism would not take place. Furthermore, the ancient Indians, with the law of karma, anticipated the modern notion of homeostasis, or self-regulation, according to which each organism continuously transfers energy and matter within itself and exchanges both with its surroundings.

The widespread belief in the creation of a Creator is utterly unscientific. Evolution has allotted a limited span of life to each individual and to each species. The struggle for the survival of our genes may prolong the life of the individual organisms and the species to which they belong, but immortality is, for all we know, not within its reach. Eventually, life will revert into the vastness of desolate space from which it first evolved.

The ancient Indian view of the world is therefore not entirely incompatible with that of modern science.

In one of his celebrated hymns—*Varṇārhavarṇastotra* 7.2—Mātṛceṭa hails the Buddha as the Sun of the natural law (*saddharmasavitṛ*) and *pratītyasamutpāda*, the fundamental causal principle, as the Sāvitrī of that law (*dharmasāvitrī*) [62]. The Sāvitrī is, as known, RV 3.62.10, "the most celebrated stanza of the RV" (Lanman, cf. also e.g. Manu 2.77–83):

tat savitur vareṇyaṃ bhargo devasya dhīmahi/ dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt.

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Whitney (apud Burnell, op. cit., p. 26) translates: "Of Savitar, the heavenly, that longed-for glory may we win, and may himself inspire our prayers!"

Mātrceṭa's identification of the Buddha with the Sun is far from merely a matter of poetical fancy. Ancient Brahmanism and Buddhism were, *mutatis mutandis*, basically heliocentric in their way of thinking.

This important observation, again, places ancient Indian religion/philosophy in the Indo-European context where it historically belongs. It was, in various ways, a common IE notion that all the gods *sub caelo* were activities and powers of the sun. This view is beautifully reflected as late as in the hymn to King Helios by the great emperor Julianus—maliciously called "the Apostate" by the adherents of the fraud and knavery (σκευωρία, πλάσμα) of the Christians. In his valuable work *Contra Galilaeos* (52C) Julianus observes: "By nature we are all, as human beings, intimately related to the sky and to the gods who appear there so that even if one were to assume another god beyond these, one would, in any case, have to assign heaven as the abode to that god" [63].

It was, indeed, a revolution of cosmology when Copernicus transferred the centre of the universe from the earth to the sun, and no less remarkable is Bruno's intuition of the infinity of a universe that contains an infinite number of worlds. Both of these ideas, however, were intuitively anticipated (but never scientifically proved) by some of the ancient Indian philosophers, be they Brahmans or Buddhists—the difference need not be that great. From this perspective these philosophers are of more than a merely antiquarian interest.

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NOTES

[1] This essay addresses itself to readers already familiar with the sources, and notes and references are therefore kept at a bare minimum. On Buddhism as Brahmanism, see recently HARTMANN, J.-U. (1987) *Das Varṇārhavarṇastotra des Mātrceṭa* (Göttingen), pp. 215-231 with reference to the earlier contributions by Geiger, Schrader and Bhattacharya. The ideal was "companionship with Brahman/Brahmā", cf. SCHRADER, F.O. (1983) *Kleine Schriften* (Wiesbaden), p. 49. Note that even the "triple protection" offered by Buddhism has Vedic roots; see WEILER, R.W. (1962) The Buddhism act of compassion, in: *Indological Studies in Honor of W. Norman Brown* (New Haven), p. 241.

[2] Translation by NORMAN, K.R. (1985) *The Rhinoceros Horn* (London) p. 49. For the ancient canonical texts the editions of the Pāli Text Society (PTS) are used. Further references in CPD = *A Critical Pāli Dictionary* (Copenhagen, 1924); and PED = *The Pāli Text Society's Pāli-English Dictionary* (London, 1972); also SWTF = *Sanskrit-Wörterbuch der buddhistischen Texte aus den Turfan-Funden*, Göttingen, 1973); and Edgerton's BHSD.

[3] Cf. e.g. the *Varṇaśatam*, an eulogy of one hundred epitheta of the Buddha, edited in WALDSCHMIDT, E. (1989) *Ausgewählte Kleine Schriften* (Stuttgart) pp. 329-345. Interesting from our point of view are: *agraprāpta, rṣisattama, gambhīra, traividya, dharmastha, brahmaprāpta, sugata*—Buddha is the "true Brahman".

[4] The most recent and convenient edition: VAN NOOTEN, B.A. & HOLLAND, G.B. (Eds) (1994) *Rig Veda. A metrically restored text* (Cambridge, MA) p. 554. The philosophically interesting hymns have often been discussed, cf. e.g. ROCHER, R. (Ed.), (1978) *India and Indology. Selected articles by W. Norman Brown* (Delhi) pp. 5-89.

[5] Refer to GELDNER, K.F. (1907-1909) *Der Rigveda in Auswahl* (Stuttgart). Since *aja* is thus Vedic, the Mahāyāna doctrine of *ajāti-samatā, anutpāda*, etc. obviously has ancient roots. See e.g. QVARNSTRÖM, O. (1989) *Hindu Philosophy in Buddhist Perspective* (Lund) p. 24 etc.

[6] Pointed out e.g. by FAUSBØLL, V. (1897) *Fire Forstudier til en Fremstilling af den indiske Mythologi*

efter *Mahābhārata* (København) pp. 1–21. See also his *Indian Mythology* (London, 1902) pp. 57–75. A work of good common sense.

[7] Quoted from my *Nagarjuniana* (Copenhagen, 1982) p. 102. Further reference to many of the sources here discussed may be found in my book from 1982. For *gambhīra* (said of *śasanāmṛta*, *dharma, tattva*), see *Ratnāvalī* 1.62, 74, 75 & MK XXIV.9). Also *dharma* is *duravagāha*, deep as the ocean (MK XXIV.12).

[8] There are often references to the *Brahmajālasūtra* in the works of the major Mahāyāna philosophers, see QVARNSTRÖM. op. cit., p. 98; SCHRADER, op. cit., *passim*; MAY, J. (1959) *Candrakīrti. Prasannapadā Madhyamakavṛtti* (Paris) pp. 277–298. For the various versions, see WELLER, F. (1987) *Kleine Schriften 1–2* (Stuttgart). (Unfortunately, the Tibetan and Mongolian versions, published in Leipzig, 1934, are not included in the reprint.). Sanskrit fragments (sections 81–93 & 155, 168) were edited by J.-U. Hartmann, Göttingen, 1989 and 1992.

[9] FRANKE, R.O. (1978) *Kleine Schriften* (Wiesbaden) pp. 917–1017.

[10] MEISIG, K. (1988) *Das Sūtra von den Vier Ständen* (Wiesbaden).

[11] In spite of LÜDERS, H. (1954) *Beobachtungen über die Sprache des buddhistischen Urkanons* (Berlin) p. 81, n. 1, I think that *ekodībhāva* is related to *ekodakībhūtam*.

[12] The canonical *logion*, e.g. in *Nagarjuniana*, p. 147, n. 21. The term *logion* (cf. Pythagoras, Jesus!), I owe to SCHERRER-SCHAUB, C.A. (1991) *Yuktiṣaṣṭikāvṛtti* (Bruxelles) *passim*. (A very valuable work with numerous references also for our purpose.)

[13] *Prasannapadā*, see Scherrer-Schaub, op. cit., p. 336 for the edition and the translations. The Buddhist sources share *saṃkalpa* with the early Upaniṣads. Very useful is LIMAYE, V.P. & VADEKAR, R.D. (Eds) (1958) *Eighteen Principal Upaniṣads* (Poona). I here rely heavily on the Index to words and clauses, pp. 522–748. Also ANDERSEN, DINES (1892) *Om Brugen og Betydningen af Verbets Genera i Sanskrit* (Kjøbenhavn).

[14] Using BROUGH, J. (Ed.) (1962) *The Gāndhārī Dharmapada* (London). See also BERNHARD, F. (Ed.) (1965–1968) *Udānavarga* (Göttingen) For *na ... etad akiñci*, cf. *naiḥśreyaśo dharmo gambhīre ... . Ratnāvalī* 1.75; and CPD s.v. *ākiñcañña* (= *nibbāna*).

[15] One has to keep in mind the image of the primeval waters. It has not yet been disturbed by the wind, or "storm", viz. of *kāma/manas*. Later on, in yoga, *manas* is, as known, associated with wind, and *kāma* with a flood: *nāsti kāmasamo hy ogho* (*Udānavarga* XXIX.37; SWTF s.v. *ogha*.)

[16] JOHANSSON, K.F. (1927)*Etymologisches und Wortgeschichtliches* (Uppsala) p. 36. Cf. also WIKANDER, STIG, *Vayu* (1941) (Uppsala/Leipzig) p. ix: "Kein Zweifel: wenn von irgendeiner Gottheit gesagt werden kann, dass sie während der arischen Periode eine beherrschende Stellung bei den indo-arischen Stämmen eingenommen habe, so von Vāyu-Vāta. Und seine Geltung ist keineswegs auf die Zeiten und Länder beschränkt, die ihn under diesem Namen gekannt haben ... ".

[17] Quoted e.g. *Prasannapadā*, p. 218. Refer to MAY, op. cit., p. 169; CPD I, p. 156; CHARPENTIER, J. (1922) *The Uttarādhyayanasūtra* (Uppsala), p. 378. For *(an)avara-*, cf. *avā-stat*, RV 10.129.5.

[18] I do not hesitate to use the terminology macrocosm/microcosm (first coined by Democritus) to express the Indian complementary pair *ekam/sarvam*. On *sarvam*, refer in MAY, op. cit., p. 206.

[19] The later *darśanas* ("ways of looking upon" (the old problems)) about *satkārya-, asatkārya-* and *anekāntavāda*, etc. also start out with this "big problem", suggested in RV 10.129: *sat* and *asat*. Likewise in Greek philosophy (from the time of Parmenides). Cf. also *astikāya, satkāya, astibhāva, astivastu*, etc.

[20] That the Buddha speaks of *four* truths surely has to do with the old Aryan notion of *dharma* being "four-footed" (complete). Cf. e.g. Manu 1.81: *catuṣpāt sakalo dharmaḥ, satyaṃ caiva kṛte yuge*. For the close relationship betwen *(ārya)satya* and *(sad)dharma*, see also MK XXIV.30 & 40. Cf. also the common expression *caturbhadra*. There are also four *varṇas, āśramas, saṃgrahavastus*, etc. In RV 10.121.9 the One, Unknown God is said to be *satyadharman*, cf. *Īśā-Up*. 15 (*satyadharma*).

[21] Compare the common Buddhist expression *dharmāmṛta*, corresponding to *madhu*. Refer to SCHERRER-SCHAUB, p. 234. For *dharman/dharma/dhārma*, etc., WÜST, W. (1935) *Vergleichendes und Etymologisches Wörterbuch des alt-indoiranischen* (Heidelberg) p. 102.

[22] E.g. *Prasannapadā*, pp. 41 and 237. Discussion, SCHAYER, S. (1931) *Ausgewählte Kapitel aus der Prasannapadā* (Kraków) p. 26. Again *satyam (paramam)* and *dharma(n)* are closely related. (Correct *pralāpadharmakam* to *pralopadharmakam* ('jig pa) on p. 238, i.1, explaining *moṣadharmakam*; cf. *viparilopa* in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Up.*)

[23] See AMES, W.L. (1993) Bhavaviveka's *Prajñāpradīpa*, in *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 21, p. 247. For *Suhṛllekha*, etc., I have used the Tibetan editions (Peking & Derge). Cf. also *Vaidalya* IX:

Viṣṇu, Śiva, Brahmā, Kapila, Ulūka, Vyāsa, Vasiṣṭha, Vyāghrabhūti (read thus!), Gārgya (read thus!) and Māṭhara; cf. Tola, F. & Dragonetti, C. (1995) *Nāgārjuna's Refutation of Logic* (Delhi) p. 62.

[24] See Scherrer-Schaub, op. cit., p. 108, n. 18 with references. Also the old verse: *ye dharmā hetuprabhavā hetuṃ teṣāṃ tathāgato hy avadat.* (ibid., p. 117).

[25] See Schrader, F.O. *Kleine Schriften*, pp. 19 and 481.

[26] Cf. Hartmann, op. cit., p. 218; May, op. cit., p. 251; Scherrer-Schaub, *passim*. For more on this, see my review of Jeffrey D. Schoening's (1988) edition of the *Śālistamba Sūtra*, in *Buddhist Studies Review*, 15, 1, pp. 107–116.

[27] From the context (cf. note 26) *dharma* must here be = *pratītyasamutpāda*. The usual translation ("here in this life") is not very accurate.

[28] Waldschmidt, E. (1967) *Von Ceylon bis Turfan*, (Göttingen) p. 351; Schrader, op. cit., pp. 121, 169, 310; PED. Early references in Kern, H. (1896) *Manual of Indian Buddhism* (Strassburg) p. 99.

[29] Ref. in CPD I, p. 346; and *Pali Tipiṭakaṃ Concordance* (London, 1956), s.v. *abhiññā(ya)* etc.

[30] Early Īśvaravāda, cf. Schrader, p. 52. When the Buddhists spoke of *aṣṭāṅgikamārga, tridoṣa, dvādaśāṅga (-nidāna)* they were, in my opinion, adopting medical terminology. Cf. e.g. Müller, R.F.G. (1951) *Grundsätze altindischer Medizin* (Kopenhagen), *passim*. Also Wezler, A. (1984) On the quadruple division of the Yogaśāstra, *Indologica Taurinensia*, 12, pp. 289–337 (a somewhat different view).

[31] Already in Aśoka's Seventh Rock Edict we find *daḍhabhattitā (i.e. dṛḍhabhaktitā)*. The composition of *stotras/stutis* was from the very start a natural expression of *bhakti*—as was the composition of hymns to the ancient Vedic gods.

[32] This was clearly recognised, e.g. by the Jaina polymath Haribhadra, in his *Śāstravārtāsamuccaya* 23, q.v.

[33] That a tathāgata—the true brahman and bhagavat—was *vidyā-caraṇasaṃpanna* was not a specific Buddhist notion. It is also so in ancient Jaina sources, cf. Schrader, op. cit. Likewise *Gītā* V.18 (*vidvāvinaya..ampanna*), cf. Meisig, op. cit., p. 166; Hartmann, p. 221; Franke, *passim*. For the formula, Waldschmidt, *Von Ceylon bis Turfan*, p. 380. Closely related, almost synonyms in the early period: *śīla-prajñā, dharma-vinaya* and *sāṃkhya-yoga, jñāna-karma*. They all refer to a Bhagavat who is intellectually and morally perfect.

[34] In other words: Gautama, Mahāvīra (even Kṛṣṇa, Kapila, etc.) were *historical* figures around whom the common myth of a Bhagavat was created. The *root* of this myth was not just the notion of *dve vāva Brahmaṇo rūpe* (above) but also that of a Mahāpuruṣa, traces of which are found, e.g. in the *Puruṣasūkta* (RV 10.90). The "double nature" or body, is suggested in verse 5 when it says that Virāj is born from Puruṣa and Puruṣa from Virāj. He participates in *amṛta* and he *sacrifices* himself for the world. This idea is adopted by the Buddhists—after all *karma* and *karuṇā* are related concepts. A visible and an invisible *kāya* of Tathāgata is assumed in *Brahmajāla*, section 73—a precursor of *Vajracchedikā*: *ye māṃ rūpeṇa cādrākṣur* ... (cf. *Dhammapada* 259). Cf. *satkāyadṛṣṭi*, to regard the (physical) body as real.

[35] In fact the early sources may have known the expression *tat tvam asi*, but avoided it as silly *bāladharma*; I think Schrader, op. cit., p. 300 was right in taking *so loko so attā* as a paraphrase of *tat tvam asi*. How can the *attā* be *loko* when one has to live *brahmabhūtena attanā*? (ibid., p. 121). Cf. also the old expression about seeing/touching *dharma* with the body; Lüders, p. 162. There are various ways to *brahmasahavyatā* (see *Saddanīti*, p. 417). It is ridiculous to say: *aham asmi Brahmā* ... . The *Tevijja* (in DN) makes it clear that it was the common ideal in those times to "see Brahmā", i.e. to find a *mārga* to *sahavyatā* with Brahmā/Brahman. The Buddha is just one of those who offer such a *mārga*.

The old canonical passage; *attā te, purisa, jānāti saccaṃ vā yadi vā musā, sakkhi* (cf. Kern, op. cit., p. 68, n. 8) could perhaps be understood as a "reply" to RV 10.129.7. Likewise the celebrated verse cited, e.g. *Prasannapadā*, p. 354 about ātman as *sākṣin* (= *adhyakṣa* of RV!). The verse on p. 355: *nāstīha sattva ātmā vā* ... does not deny *ātman* as *sākṣin*, but as being present as an empirical entity, *here* in the objective world. This suggests that Gautama accepted the "existence" of an *ātman*, a "witness" to real and unreal, itself, like *vijñāna* (DN I, p. 223) *ananta, anidarśana*, effulgent etc. Cf. *Śvetāśvatara-Up*, VI.11, *Gītā* IX.18. As for *tattva* note the remark in the *Mahābhāṣya: tad api nityaṃ yatra tattvaṃ na vihanyate.* Quoted in Jacobi, H. (1970) *Kleine Schriften* (Wiesbaden) p. 686, n. 1.

[36] Cf. my paper, Lindtner, C. (1981) "Atiśa's introduction to the two truths, and its sources", in *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 9, pp. 161–214.

[37] See LINDTNER, C. (1992–1994) Nāgārjuna and the problem of precanonical Buddhism, *Religious Studies*, 15–17, pp. 112–136. Also, *Buddhist Studies Review* (1997), 14, pp. 109–139, and *The Adyar Library Bulletin* (1997), 61, pp. 45–68.

[38] On these four "marks", see Jaini's fine paper, JAINI, P.S. (1970) Śramaṇas: their conflict with Brahamanical society, in: J.W. ELDER (Ed.) *Chapters in Indian Civilization* (Dubuque, IA) pp. 39–81.

[39] This very interesting text was edited and translated by SCHNEIDER, J. (1993) *Der Lobpreis der Vorzüglichkeit des Buddha* (Bonn). Verse 59 alludes to Manu IV.80. "Unter den Göttern kritisiert der Text v.a. Śiva, Viṣṇu-Kṛṣṇa, Brahman (i.e. Brahmā), und Indra-Śakra. An Philosophien kennt der Autor v.a. das Sāṃkhya, aber auch Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika. Mīmāṃsā und Vedānta sind dem Verfasser nicht unbekannt. Von den nichthinduistischen Religionen findet der Buddhismus Erwähnung" (p. 12, n. 7).

[40] References to Pārasīka are common in Buddhist and Brahmanical literature. The first (and only) reference to Moslems that I know of is to be found in Avalokitavrata's commentary to *Prajñāpradīpa* (*mu sul man*).

[41] In GARBE, R. (1921) *Die Bhagavadgītā* (Leipzig) p. 145.

[42] WAYMAN, A. & H. (1974) *The Lion's Roar of Queen Śrīmālā* (New York/London) p. 96; TAKASAKI, J. (1966) *A Study on the Ratnagotravibhāga (Uttaratantra)* (Roma).

[43] E.g. TAKASAKI, op. cit., p. 206 (for *īśa*, etc., p. 21).

[44] E.g. MATSUNAGA, Y. (Ed.) (1978) *The Guhyasamāja-Tantra* (Osaka) p. 4, etc. etc.

[45] Cf. my *Nāgārjuniana*, p. 228.

[46] QVARNSTRÖM, OLLE (1989) *Hindu Philosophy in Buddhist Perspective* (Lund), *passim*.

[47] From my *Nāgārjuniana*, p. 152; cf. QVARNSTRÖM, p. 127, n. 169.

[48] The commentaries to MK V: *Dhātuparīkṣā*; *Prasannapadā*, p. 129; SCHAYER, S. (1931) *Ausgewählte Kapitel aus der Prasannapadā* (Kraków) p. 1.

[49] For the texts, QVARNSTRÖM, op. cit., p. 120. See also Bhavya's MHK V.106: The Buddha's *jñāna* is like *ākāśa*. For *dhātu*, *bhūta*, etc., see also MÜLLER, R.F.G. *Grundsätze altindischer Medizin*, Kopenhagen, *passim*.

[50] Quoted in RADHAKRISHNAN, S. (1960) *The Brahma Sūtra* (London) p. 455. It was even used in a canonical Mahāyāna text: *yac ca mṛdbhājanasyābhyantaram ākāśam yac ca ratnabhājanasyābhyantaram ākāśam —ākāśadhātur evaiṣaḥ* (quoted *Prasannapadā*, p. 375).

[51] For such lists, e.g. *Prasannapadā*, pp. 328 and 562; SWTF, p. 241.

[52] The two verses on *ātman* as *nātha* and *sākṣin* are also quoted by Bhavya with a very extensive discussion in his comments on MK XVIII.5. Likewise Avalokitavrata. Clearly, their interpretation was highly controversial, but their proper historical context unfortunately escaped the learned *ācāryas* of yore.

[53] MACDONELL, A.A. (1919) *A Vedic Reader for Students* (Oxford) p. 135. For the following remarks about Varuṇa, cf. e.g. GONDA, J. (1960) *Die Religionen Indiens I* (Stuttgart) pp. 73–84.

[54] Cf. DIETZ, S. (Ed.) (1984) *Fragmente des Dharmaskandha* (Göttingen) p. 62 (with references).

[55] In other words: one and the same *ātman* plays (much like Janus!) two roles, as two persons (*puruṣa*, Lat. *persona*), and as an "intermediary", consisting of *vijñāna/manas/svapna*. The duality, then, depends on *vijñāna*. Is there here an allusion to RV 1.164.20? Cf. *Muṇḍaka-Up.* III.1–4.

[56] Cf. *Prasannapadā*, p. 371: *vineyajanānurūpyeṇa ca śāsanam anuśāsanam. ... sarvāś caitā deśanā buddhānām ... tattvāmṛtāvatāropāyatvena vyavasthitāḥ*. Self-knowledge (*svayam* ...), then, is not "something" that one can communicate, transfer or "exchange" with others.

[57] Cf. my paper LINDTNER, C. (1992) On Nāgārjuna's epistemology, in: A. WEZLER & E. HAMMERSCHMIDT (Eds), *Proceedings of the XXXII International Congress for Asian and North African Studies, Hamburg, 25th–30th August 1986*, Stuttgart 1992, p. 168. For Kambala's *Ālokamālā*, see "A treatise on Buddhist idealism", in: LINDTNER, C. (1985) *Miscellanea Buddhica*, (Copenhagen) pp. 109–221.

[58] This means that yoga, in the sense of *samādhi*, is a technique of placing, or concentrating macrocosm in microcosm. It is, therefore, easier to understand how a yogi can "shake, cleave and remove mountains", etc. He has mastery over the elements, etc., because he has them in his heart. Terms like *vikalpa*, *parikalpa*, *prapañca*, etc., must therefore, be taken quite literally. Very nicely, Kambala (*Ālokamālā* 128) looks upon *tribhuvanam idam* as a *saṃgraha* in the *hṛdayagagana*. This, too, should be taken quite *ad verbum*. Again, the idea is that of seeing the universe in oneself, by oneself, i.e. not really seeing anything.

[59] *Prasannapadā*, pp. 329 and 441; *Kośa* VII, p. 33, etc.

[60] RAU, W. (Ed.) (1977) *Bhartṛharis Vākyapadīya* (Wiesbaden) p. 135. Note that *vibhūti* and *bhāga* suggest that the world is not a "creation" but rather a part of mind, from which it is not really different.

[61] I have discussed these verses with further reference in DRABINA, J. (Ed.) (1993) *Studia Religiologica*, XXVI (Kraków) p. 18.

[62] HARTMANN, op. cit., p. 217.

[63] For a good recent edition of this important text, see MYNSTER, L. (1990) *Kejser Julian mod Galilæerne* (Copenhagen).

Additional Note

Early Buddhism as natural philosophy I have discussed further in "Buddhism as *saddhātuvāda*", in *The Adyar Bulletin*, 61 (1997), pp. 45–68.

The Indian and Buddhist myth of Buddha as Bhagavat has influenced decisively the Christian myth of Jesus as Christ as expounded in the NT Gospels. The authors/editors of the four NT Gospels were thoroughly familiar with the texts constituting the Buddhist Gospel. Numerous passages were taken over, often verbatim. Historically speaking, "Jesus" (and "Christ") now appears to be but Buddha in (bad) disguise. This is (no longer!) the so-called "Messianic Secret". See my book *Hīnayāna. Den tidlige indiske buddhisme*, København 1998, pp. 60–68.

Several sources on *pratītyasamutpāda* have been translated and discussed in "Madhyamaka Causality", to appear in *Hōrin. Vergleichende Studien zur japanischen Kultur*, 6 (1999). More on *ātman* as *sākṣin* and *nātha*, and related matters, may be found in the book edited by B. Dessein, *Communication and Cognition*, Gent 1999.

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Review Article

The Importance of *Hīnayāna* and *Mahāyāna*

Two volumes of translations (from Pali, Tibetan, Chinese and Sanskrit) of central *Hīnayāna* and *Mahāyāna* *sūtras* by Christian Lindtner give scholarly and reliable texts and provide an overview of the central issues in Buddhism as seen by some of the most distinctive Buddhist saints and philosophers themselves.

Introduction

All revealed religions, such as Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Jainism, share (in contradistinction to Hinduism, Greek, Roman and Chinese religions) the mutual fate of being divided into two main schools (and a number of lesser sects), viz. *Sunnī* and *Šī'a*, Protestantism and Catholicism, *Hīnayāna* and *Mahāyāna*, *Śvetāmbara* and *Digambara*.

Amongst these religions, however, Jainism and Buddhism may be characterised as psychological philosophies because the practice of yoga and meditation tend to give the practitioners the "same" insight as the founder of the school once had. This tendency furthers an innate peaceful and tolerant attitude contrasting with the more dogmatic attitude of faith-systems such as Christianity, Islam and Judaism in which the believers put their trust in the insight the founder of the faith once had. A more general difference appears to be that whereas Avalokiteśvara, Śiva or Ambikā, like Zeus, Apollo and Artemis, instinctively (or sometimes consciously) were intuited as really being human artefacts designed to symbolise the ineffable substratum beneath all manifestations, Jahveh, God and Allah were regarded as being literally identical with this unmanifested substratum, i.e. in the latter three cases the personifications were absolute.

Yoga and meditation are empirical methods, in so far as their results are subject to verification and falsification. This is common to all schools of yoga and meditation, whether Jainist, Buddhist or Hinduist. This similarity with science has often been noted; of course, the difference consists in the fact that whereas science is completely cumulative and communicable the science of yoga and meditation lives and dies with the individual practising it, though the methods are part of a tradition and partly subject to diachronic refinement.

The practice of yoga and meditation are inspired and furthered by the Buddhist *sūtras*, and Christian Lindtner, who has made extensive investigations into the authenticity of the texts of Nāgārjuna, has succeeded in establishing dependable and readable versions of central *Hīnayāna* and *Mahāyāna* texts—not necessarily giving perhaps always the most obvious choices, but nevertheless always texts displaying distinctive and cardinal points. Both the *Mahāyāna* (in the following abbreviated as M) and the *Hīnayāna* (abbreviated H) volumes have two important aspects. The first is purely historical and as such of interest to the history of religion, psychology and science. The second is existentialistic and has importance for our own ethical, aesthetical and psychological health. These primary texts give the essence of Buddhism, as experienced by Buddhists themselves, and emphasise the issues which are crucial for the level at which one chooses to live one's life. The urgency of the message of how to transcend suffering/ignorance is throughout unmistakable. Buddhist *sūtras* are not mainly concerned with analysis, logic and semantic problems, and neither are they concerned with phenomenology as speculation. These texts contain rather a category of physiologically determined and innate experiences delineated in an allegorical and sometimes poetic language as there is no other kind of language available.

Beyond the basic historical level—such as the unravelling of dates, authorship and influences, the definitions of terms within each tradition and the change over time in these definitions—lies the inherent difficulty of coming close to the spirit of the age and of the author. The methodology can be studied as a science, but the art hardly so. Presumably it requires an affinity, a kind of *sahṛdaya* outlook while still retaining a critical distance where that is required. Both these qualities are present in these volumes.

The *Hīnayāna* volume contains, e.g. *Catuṣpariṣatsūtra*, *Aggaññasutta*, *Suttanipāta*, *Catuḥśataka* and *Viśiṣṭastava*, and the *Mahāyāna* volume *Upāliparipṛcchāsūtra*, *Samādhirājasūtra*, *Triṃśikā*, *Ālambanaparīkṣā* and *Madhyamakahṛdaya*; each chapter is provided with an introduction.

In the following I shall concentrate on a couple of points raised by the texts and the translation before discussing some of the key issues regarding the influence of Buddhism, the general importance of Buddhist thought on the absence of an ego and a self, and the nature of consciousness *vis-à-vis* mental phenomena. My translations are from the Danish text.

Translation

In letting Buddhism speak for itself Lindtner has concentrated on the major (and perennial) issues. The tricky balance of making such a translation acceptable to both Buddhists, historians specialising in religion as well as to (that illusive creature) the general reader is accomplished in so far as this is possible given the esoteric and abrupt style of the texts. Crucial words are added in brackets to facilitate the reading, and in fact to make it comprehensible though the typical condensed *sūtra* style, which presupposes that the reader is thoroughly familiar with the subject, does not easily lend itself to a readable and precise translation.

However, explanations in the form of footnotes, would, in spite of being obstacles to a fair fluid reading, enhance the conceptualisation of some of the analogies as well as the succinctness of some of the metaphors. "No one, not even a *cakravāka*, can stand up to *Mahādeva*, who is half a woman ..." (H, *Viśiṣṭastava* 7, p. 200). Here, one might have expected a note explaining the specific ethology of brahminy ducks, i.e. especially

the classical Indian emphasis on bonding behaviour which is not easily observable, and perhaps also a note about *Ardhanārīśvara*. And *acintyatā* "inconceivability" (M, *Upāliparipṛcchāsūtra* 49, p. 38.) is better than "incomprehensibility", as defining "the state of being outside the scope of imagination" (Dictionary of Sanskrit 1.III, A.M. Ghatage, Poona 1978). "Even if I have taught the true way towards the primal goal, *dhyāna*, *vimokṣa* and *samādhi*, then, (really speaking), there is no such 'thing' as the cessation (of anxiety); such 'things' are caused by (artificial) categorization" (M, *Upāli.* 64, p. 41). Here Lindtner has added "artificial", and all categorisation is probably counterproductive to a clear unified view of reality.

Lindtner defines *samādhi* as a state of clarity in which all usual thought-processes has ceased. But then he continues with a further definition: "trance" (M, p. 46), which I, in spite of OED b "a state of mental abstraction from external things, absorption, exaltation, rapture, ecstacy", e.g. quoting Bacon: "His ... conversation towards God is full of passion, of zeal, and of traunssis" (i.e. extasis), find problematic because *śūnyatā*, as occurring in the state of *samādhi*, is not a real mental phenomenon. Mental phenomena are thought-processes, i.e. comprising all that which arises in the relative mutually interdependent dualistic world; whereas *śūnyatā* is trans-mental; mental activity is *sūkṣma*, subtle; *śūnyatā* is not this and not that, neither, both and everything simultaneously with being nothing. There are good reasons for distinguishing between consciousness as such, the *Tathāgata* as such, and the *dharmakāya* on one hand and consciousness of something on the other; consciousness of something becomes a mental phenomenon, a correlate of *citta* proper; *śūnyatā* seems to be neither mental nor emotional nor physical (psychosomatic) nor even a phenomenon or a multitude of phenomena—only a superposed potentiality. This distinction is apparently already present in *kāmas tád ágre sám avartatādhi mānaso rétaḥ prathamáṃ yád āsīt.* "In the beginning Desire took hold of it (the non-existent Universe)—that was the first seed of thinking/mind" (Ṛgveda X. 129.4).

A good question would be to ask if *śūnyatā* might be likened allegorically to infinity/eternity. Infinity/eternity transcends thought. Even if it is possible to operate mathematically with such "concepts" any mental understanding of them is impossible. Even very large numbers, such as 10^{80}, the number of protons in the visible universe, or 10^{110}, the number of molecular vibrations (in picoseconds) in the universe since the Big Bang, are in one category while infinity or eternity remains something quite different, i. e. absolutely inconceivable mentally, *acintya*. This seems to be a fairly good analogy suggesting the difference between the phenomenal relative and mutually dependent universe of *citta*—and *śūnyatā*.

Words like *aṇu* and *aṇuka* are translated by "atom", (M, p. 95) and it is certainly a good solution as long as one keeps in mind the fundamental difference between the Indian concepts of matter at a minute scale (and of course this also applies to Demokritus' ἄτομοσ) and real particle physics, quantum mechanics and quantum fields. Key terms of this kind are better left untranslated, as Lindtner indeed does often (or if not the term is given in a parenthesis) e.g. *samādhi* for which there is no proper word in Germanic languages; likewise *ārya* is certainly better than "noble"; *ārya* is so specifically Indian as to be untranslatable by a single word.

Though a shared set of distinct experiences were common to the authors of these *sūtras* individuality asserted itself in multiple ways and prolonged arguments. Thus the *Yogācāra* supposed that as the world of "atoms" neither could be regarded as constituting a closed entity without parts nor as a multiplicity of things with different parts, the world *ipso facto* had to be unreal as it could not, in this way at least, be proven to exist

on its own. And as there was no object "outside" there could not be a subject "inside" either. But more significant for the unreality of the external world of things was it that the only "thing" that was real and independent was consciousness itself. Here apparent analogies and logic combined with speculation seem to lead into a verbal *cul de sac*; exactly what the experience of *śūnyatā* was supposed to be a panacea against. The *Madhyamaka* on the other hand saw the world as being empty through and through. However, Nāgārjuna was perceptive, proving that the only thing one might do with and in language was to show the absurdity and inherent self-contradictions of any point of view; i.e. language could not/cannot prove/disprove *śūnyatā*, its existence and/or its non-existence.

Lindtner has previously edited and translated the text of Bhavya's important *Madhyamakahṛdaya* from Sanskrit and Tibetan; here chapters 1–5 and 8–9 are translated. The *svatantra* viewpoint is interesting as a partial reconciliation between the *Yogācāra* and the *Madhyamaka* view by positing two truths, a higher and a lower, in each sphere, and identifying the higher truth in the relative sphere with the lower in the absolute sphere. The *Madhyamakahṛdaya* is also written in the usual compact *sūtra* style and many passages are obscure requiring substitution of the words which are implied. Lindtner has struck a fine balance between precision and readability, but many sentences would seem to require further elucidation, e.g. "Furthermore (relatively speaking) ('soul') may, conceptually, denominate 'consciousness', but it would be wrong (to see the 'soul' as absolute)" (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* III.98, p. 139). Here the added "absolute" is necessary to make any sense of the passage. This is apparently again an attempt to distinguish absolute consciousness from consciousness suffusing mental aspects. And likewise "Here words do no longer apply; this (*tattva*) is never the object of thought. There is also no longer intentionality (*saṃkalpa*); the silence of insight (*jñāna*) is born" (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* III.283, p. 165). Lindtner translates *saṃkalpa* by "will to life", which gives the notion as long as one remembers that it is the conscious desire to accomplish this or that which has been superseded. However, the authors of all these texts did not seem to take their own advice too seriously for they certainly kept up a steady stream of *sūtras*; but perhaps there were then, as now, ten times as many *pratyekabuddhas* who kept silence.

"It is without any mark, it does not show itself; it is without concepts, without words. For he who sees, without seeing, it is the sight of him who only is known through *buddhi*" (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* III.246, p. 160). *Buddhi* is here translated by "reason", however, among the numerous shades of meaning of *buddhi* such as "intelligence, discernment" and "understanding"—"meditative perception" might have suggested the intention better.

Lindtner sees Buddhism as embodying a kind of humanism grounded in *dharma* and reason (M, p. 12); but both must fundamentally be grounded in the experience of *śūnyatā*. *Dharma* means "duty", and *dharma* is ascertained through *jñāna* (p. 17). But one might argue that *dharma* is duty only in so far as one has recognised that which is one's duty and thus becomes unable to do anything else; there seems to exist an underlying presupposition of fate; one discovers that one has a fate to fulfil and then one becomes incapable of not fulfilling it; i.e. duty is here not something which one consciously decides that one ought to do, something externally imposed; it is instead something which springs up spontaneously and leaves one with no choice, i.e. one wants above all else to do precisely that.

The Influence of Buddhism

The reaction of Buddhists against the Brahmins was focused on their very privileged position as priests, their infallible faith in the Veda as the ultimate authority regarding all possible questions; their complete dependence on rituals, often bloody sacrifices, as a means of control and as a road to salvation, and in their faith in a divine Creator (H, p. 63). So Buddhism emphasised strongly that it was only through one's own acts that one might obtain liberation; rituals and births as privileged Brahmins did not help (H, p. 64). This notion of equality and merit was revolutionary as was the lofty and beautiful concept of *ahiṃsā*, non-violence *vis-à-vis* all living beings. For example, in the letter to Kaniṣka "Keep to the truth and tell me if it is right or wrong that a king kills or will let kill (innocent animals such as) birds, deer and cattle?" (H, *Mahārājakaniṣkalekha* 66, p. 219). And "To an even greater extent than toward human beings You ought to show compassion toward animals, for they are plagued by suffering to an even greater extent" (H, *Mahārājakaniṣkalekha* 78, p. 220). Urging Kaniṣka to be compassionate is truly reasonable, but it is remarkable that the sage seems to have disregarded the capacity of non-human animals also to live in the present and enjoy it when his opportunities for direct observation must have been unique, at least compared to the catastrophic conditions of to-day. But this distinct sense of loving kindness, empathy, *karuṇā*, and non-violence, *ahiṃsā*, seem to be the first conceptualisation of an altruistic ideal which has not yet been bettered (as Milarepa said "The experience of emptiness engenders compassion").

Lindtner indicates also the historical influence of Buddhism both in India and abroad. Thus the *Bhagavadgītā* should be full of hidden polemics directed against Buddhism (H, p. 195). The reform movement of Buddhism initiated a Hinduistic counter movement. One of its most important sources is the *Gītā*. Kṛṣṇa defends the caste system by means of *karma* and *dharma*. No society can survive following the doctrine of *ahiṃsā* and be utterly pacifistic; such an attitude is cowardly and dishonourable. Duty and fate, *dharma*, are closely connected to caste. The *Bhagavadgītā* in fact also seems to absorb Buddhism by using such terms as *brahmanirvāṇa* (H, p. 196); and Indian Buddhism finally became absorbed completely by Hinduism as Buddha became accepted as a Bhagavat Gestalt (H, p. 197).

The question of the influence of Buddhism on Christianity is thorny and controversial though Indian presence and influence in the Græco-Roman world are comparatively well documented. *Prajñā*, a central feminine deity, Wisdom personified as a mother-saviouress, had an early influence on Gnosticism (H, p. 61). And there are distinct parallel developments between Hinduism/Jainism, Hinduism/Buddhism and the Old Testament/New Testament (H, p. 11). Furthermore, Bhagavatism, a kind of hypostasis, i.e. Buddha as Siddhārtha as well as the Buddha, could be regarded as a parallel movement to Christianity or even as a partial presupposition. Lindtner assumes that the *Catuṣpariṣatsūtra*, which was used by Buddhist missionaries, could have had an indirect influence on the Gospels (H, p. 13). Thus the concept of Bhagavatism may have influenced The New Testament regarding the notion that Jesus had a double nature, being both human and divine, both mortal and immortal, with two bodies, a physical and a spiritual one; this seems, as Lindtner points out, decidedly Indian, primarily manifested in the Gestalt of the Bhagavat of which Kṛṣṇa also is a good example (H, p. 61), another is Mahāvīra. Bhagavatism is an attempt to give an allegorical illustration of the fact that Buddha and Kṛṣṇa (and hence possibly Jesus) while still human in flesh and blood, also simultaneously were divine in the sense of

being aware of *śūnyatā* or God the Father as the androcentric Hebrew tradition tried to explain it. This two-fold nature seems, according to Lindtner, to originate in the Vedic notion of *brahmă* as the unmanifested impersonal principle and Brahmā as the manifested and personal principle (H, p. 62). Behind both lies the physiological notion of the two realms, *śūnyatā* and the relative manifested world of *citta*.

Various sporadic statements suggest the presence of Indians and Indian thought in the Hellenistic world. Strabo writes that an Indian delegation visited Athens during the reign of Augustus and that one of the delegates, Zarmanochegas, burnt himself *in publico*. The first part of the word "Zarmanochegas" could be a rendering of *śramaṇa*, a Buddhist "monk" or "mendicant" (H, p. 63). Kalyāṇa and Zarmanochegas might indeed have inspired the Christian martyrs. So Lindtner assumes that this indicates the presence of Indian missionary activity and this in turn enhances the likelihood of *Hīnayāna* influence on the Gospels. The population of Athens at the time of Augustus would have been baffled by the sight of someone willingly committing suicide in such an atrocious manner, and it is probable that Zarmanochegas could have made a considerable impression because such an act appeared utterly incomprehensible to Greek mentality (rationalising about the reason for *satī* the Greeks supposed that it was a way of preventing wives from poisoning their husbands).

Lindtner further argues that several of the notions of the Gospels are best understood as Judaised Buddhism, especially as pertaining to the notions of suffering, salvation, *karma*, resurrection and sacrifice (H, p. 64). The problem is whether both Buddhism and Christianity independently reveal common human trends and aspects of behaviour or whether Buddhist ideas floated around in the Hellenistic world. Alexandria was also then close to Palestine and as the Græco-Roman world, including Palestine, of, say, 50–300 AD, was susceptible to Christianity, as history shows, then it would appear likely that the same susceptibility could have favoured comparable if not closely identical ideas in the period from 50 BC to 50 AD.

And yet the human condition, between a birth and a death, a condition we share with all life, animals as well as plants and bacteria, is diachronically and synchronically unchanged. There are no arguments supporting even a small change in physiology at least within the timespan of recorded religions, so it is conceivable that the same idea may have struck two people independently. However, it is odd that the wheel, for example, was never invented in America; the idea seems so obvious; but it is perhaps only obvious once it is seen and to the individual who gets the idea, cf. Newton's apple or Kekulé's snake (the closed benzene ring). Once something new is perceived it becomes self-evident.

Separating the scant historical data from the physiological sub-stratum is a delicate process, especially as about 90% of all cultures have more or less institutionalised procedures for reaching at least altered states of consciousness if not states comparable to *samādhi*, though a close reading of all the relevant texts might give definite clues.

The Limits of Language

In Buddhism there is no assumption of the existence of a "soul", *ātmā*, or any divine principle, *brahmă* as in *Vedānta* and no God, *Īśvara*, as in *Mīmāṃsā*—there is only emptiness, *śūnyatā*, the Plenum Void, that which is empty and full simultaneously without being neither. Expressed as this it becomes a paradox, an illogical statement, yet (this) "... as reality cannot be the object of logic, one cannot understand it by means of inference". (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* V.104, p. 202). The only answer is that

language is simply not geared to deal with this, as language cuts, divides, fragmentises and categorises, dealing only with one thing at a time. The inadequacy of language to grasp a reality, which is ineffable, is continuously emphasised.

The Illusions of *ātmā* and ahaṃkāra

One of the main and fundamental realisations of Buddhist philosophy and religion was that there strictly speaking was no ground for positing such an entity as an ego or a "self". The concept of a self, of an identity, seems best explained physiologically as originating in the sensation of body boundaries. Any paramecium would have to have a sense of that to survive as that would relate it as an organism to the environment and determine the two prime impulses of attraction and repulsion. Vertebrates would naturally have a much more subtle sense of body-self with far more moments of experience.

Yet the innate fragility of human concepts of self is clearly demonstrated during sensory deprivation in tanks with warm water as the sensation of body boundary vanishes and one attempts to find alternative definitions; the ambiguous and deceptive nature of the self emerges when the notions of self/other, inside/outside vanishes. Sensory deprivation and meditation both minimise the amount of proprioceptive stimuli that may reach the brain. This accentuates new orientations and a search for meaning beyond the ordinary (*laukika*) level.

This central doctrine or insight, that the personality as such was a fiction, was expressed allegorically in many different ways. The stream of consciousness looks like a river if seen from afar, but under closer scrutiny the stream is seen to consist of water molecules rushing along in between each other towards the sea. So is each single experience, what Whitehead called a "moment of experience", a brief single flash, but because the duration of such flashes (each one lasts from about 10–100 or 200 milliseconds, and according to some definitions it is also the duration of a *kṣaṇa*) and because of the vast number of them, consciousness appears to be one unbroken whole. "That which one calls a person's 'life' is nothing but a moment of consciousness ..." (H, *Catuḥśataka* 10, p. 181). The notion of individuality is further stabilised by memory processes. A forest is a conglomeration, an agglutination (*dravya*) for it consists of parts, of individual trees, so the denotation is an abstract entity fashioned for the sake of convenience. "A forest cannot be regarded as a unity; it consists of flame-of-the-forest trees and other (trees)" (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* III.37 p. 130). And "Fundamentally it is not right/logical to say that an individual (*nāmarūpa*) goes through *saṃsāra*. It is because the (individual is) an agglutination of things ..." (moments of experience) (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* III.89, p. 137). And "When one says that someone is burning something in a fire then it is really the fire which is burning, not the charcoal burner who is burning. In the same way (is it) when one knows something by means of one's understanding. It is the cognition which is cognizing, not the 'soul' " (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* VIII.46, p. 209). The *Madhyamakahṛdaya* and the *Upāliparipṛcchāsūtra* emphasise the illusion of a permanent ego again and again. The term 'ego' or 'egohood' *ahaṃkāra*, has a wide spectrum of connotations and definitions, however, the central denotation suggests that it constitutes all past ontological experiences, i.e. memories, and these memories, conscious as well as unconscious, constitute the image one has of oneself, one's definition of oneself, one's boundaries and one's character. Basically this consists of patterns of superposed experiences, determined by character (i.e. genes) and circumstances (i.e. time and space). Like a forest can be seen

to be an abstract entity consisting of a finite number of individual trees, so the "personality" of an individual may be seen to be an abstract entity loosely covering the accumulated sum of past experiences. This does not deny individuality as genetic profile alone precludes duplication; and added to this comes the further individualisation determined by space and time. But there is no "I" which experiences; there is an experience, not even an experience which experiences, but in fact an experience process, an experiencing consisting of a vast number of separate experiences appearing as in a flow, an unbroken unity, like a film in which the single images remain (usually) unperceived—only the flow comes to exist.

The term *ātmā* (literally 'breath') or soul is a considerably more Protean beast definitionally. It is not used or defined in Freudian or cognitive psychology, let alone in neuropsychology. In Vedāntic terminology it is the spark of *brahmă* which animates the individual, that which makes the individual come alive. Buddhism denies the existence of *ātmā*. "Fundamentally there is then no ('soul', etc.), which becomes attached or liberated. By meditating on past time and future time, the same is seen to be true of thought" (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* III.99, p. 139); and "There is nothing which in any way is created or fostered by this (*Dharmakāya*). There is no (soul) which abides therein, and no (soul) which is dissolved therein" (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* III.288, p. 166). So presumably 'soul' is also seen as constituted by a flow of separate experience-units.

Buddhist philosophy is pragmatic and existentialistic in so far as it was meant to serve as an instrument with which to point towards the goal of *śūnyatā* and *nirvāṇa*, and thereby decrease suffering and increase understanding, calmness and happiness. The *sūtras* merely functioned as means towards that end. They were meant to be transcended, to be rendered superfluous once the goal of personal insight had been attained. As the questions of the meaning of life, suffering, happiness (*sukhaduḥkha*) and death were central, Buddhist philosophy appears to have more in common with the Continental tradition than with the purely Anglo-American tradition which limits itself to language and language-related problems seeing in a refinement of such analytical tools a solution to most, if not all, problems of philosophical interest. Again and again it is stated that speculations are a waste of time. As in *Upāli*. 53 (M, p. 39): "Those who speculate about the emptiness of the dharmas, they are fools who have gone astray", and in 54: "All confusion (*prapañca*) is caused by thought-speculations. One has to realize that the *dharmas* are inconceivable."

The Nature of Consciousness and Mental Activity

Pure/objectless consciousness is clearly differentiated from thought. "Devoid of concepts, without reflections, without marks and denominations, not dualistic, not non-dualistic, quiet, empty of the movements of thought" (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* I.2, p. 118). The phenomenological philosophers tried to reach a state of fundamental truth using introspection, but by using language as a means they could not transcend language and remained therefore unaware of the nature of *śūnyatā*. In this connection it is worth while remembering that Kant did not deny the existence of the potential state of objectless consciousness but he thought that it was beyond human ability to experience it.

As *śūnyatā* and simultaneous realisation of the emptiness of the phenomenal world are indescribable it is only possible to point towards them, to use allegorical statements: "As a man who is looking at a mass of foam carried away by a river, if he looks closer

he sees that there is nothing—remember, just like this, is everything we know", and "When the rain pours down bubbles arise one by one. Bubbles are created and bubbles burst and do no longer exist, remember, just like this is everything we know" (M, *Samādhirājasūtra* 5 and 6, p. 50). These poetic images should make the listener become less attached to the world of the senses. So the central experience of life, between a birth and a death was "Impossible to imagine, impossible to realize (i.e. beforehand), unfathomable and devoid of characteristics, indescribable, only experiencable spontaneously, without beginning, without end, full of peace"(M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* I.1, p. 118).

An acute perception differentiating between the sense organs and the conceptualising faculty of the mind is stated in *Madhyamakahṛdaya* III.45 (M, p. 131), "In an absolute sense the eye (as an organ of sense) cannot perceive form; it (the eye) has not the faculty of cognizing". This is introspection at its best.

The illusionary *māyā*-like aspect of the phenomenal world is stated continually: "Of course such things (as attachment and liberation) are possible, but only in so far as all things are separate, dependent on and causing specific phenomena. Hence they are without self-existence, like illusions and dreams" (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* I.87, p. 137). And "It is by discovering the emptiness of self-being and by the cessation of the thought about it, that one, by a yoga which attains nothing, obtains the indestructible nature of the indestructible" (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* 3.115, p. 141). The indescribable nature of the underlying void is also succinctly suggested in the following statement: "For it is not even possible to establish a reason (*buddhi*) devoid of concepts, because there is no object of cognition to be cognized, and this is recognized by those who know reality as the incomparable reality (*tattva*)" (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* III.266, p. 163). The "nature" of consciousness without an object is suggested in various ways, for example, "When cognition no longer has any external support it becomes pure cognition—when there no longer is any object to be cognized then there is no (subject) which can cognize" (M, *Triṃśikā* 28, p. 99); and "Ultimately *nirvāṇa* cannot be defined—neither as being nor as absence of being" (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* III.109, p. 140). "When one perceives that which is empty then there is absolutely nothing which exists. When one understands by this that one does not understand, then it is conceptually speaking perception of emptiness" (M, *Satyadvayuavatara* 6, p. 244). The origin of the paradoxical nature of Zen is seen in the following: "(Relatively speaking) it is common knowledge that thoughts and mental phenomena have a mental and cognitive nature. (Absolutely speaking) yogis have no reasons and no example. They have simply no point of view" (M, *Madhyamakahṛdaya* IV.72, p. 187), i.e. "Beyond the menhirs of desire premeditated".

In the introduction to the *Śālistambasūtra* Lindtner points out that the schism between *Madhyamaka* and *Yogācāra* (partly) lies in the concept of *vijñānabīja*, "the seed of consciousness". The difficult question is to decide whether consciousness is empty or whether it *is* emptiness *per se*; is it something in itself or is it only something in relation to something else? and is, as the *Yogācāra* says, everything only consciousness while reality may be the object of perception/realisation or is realisation objectless and indescribable? However, the *Madhyamaka* says that it may be suggested; in a similar way Abhinavagupta and Ānandavardhana said that the poetic element as a *rasa* could not be expressed or stated but only implied. This should answer Udayana's question about whether *śūnyatā* was something or nothing by silently pointing to it.

Several key terms would need to be defined as exactly as possible, e.g. Vasubandhu's *ālayavijñāna* (which appears to have much in common with *ātmā*), is, as the "home" or

"ground/abode of consciousness", said to produce the *vāsanās* (mental patterns and dispositions) which form traces and tendencies which generate actions producing habits which reinforce and/or form character which then in turn becomes the cause of future reincarnations beginning with *ālayavijñāna*.

Neuropsychologically each stage in the development of the sensory and cognitive system would add more sophisticated notions to the sense of "self". Following the presumably primordial "sense of self" produced by any purely cytoskeletal structure, the pros-, mes- and rhombencephalon and the development of each of these in the various phyla would generate more extensive notions of self-awareness and vastly increase the width and the depth of the stream of consciousness, i.e. the multitudes of moments of experience.

The *ālayavijñāna* is supposed to contain the primordial karmic energies (*vāsanā*) as seeds (*bīja*). However, Vasubandhu seems to think that consciousness of 'self' (*manovijñāna*) is developed first, and then consciousness about the environment, whereas the two spheres of awareness must evolve, phylogenetically as well as ontogenetically, simultaneously in a process of close interactions of mutually dependent activities. The definition of *vāsanās* is vague as *Śaṅkara* pointed out, they seem to lack characteristics though they have to be object-related phenomena containing specific and distinct "information", and there does not seem to be any concepts in *ālayavijñāna* which could suggest a genetic approach; it is rather a purely mental phenomenon. It could be that *ālayavijñāna* was thought to constitute the accumulated karmic patterns of the illusions of a "self" which were so persistent as to be able to transcend the dissolution of one organism and attach itself to another in the process of being created (at the moment when the spermatozoon penetrated the cell wall or when the mitosis began?).

A term which changes somewhat according to viewpoint is *pratītyasamutpāda* (the chain of dependent origination) and a more precise definition of its various shades of meaning and historical interpretations would facilitate its eventual correlation with physical and mental systems. The concept of *pratītyasamutpāda* is crucial in Buddhism. Basically it does not mean that some things depend on other things which are independent, but that all things are mutually dependent; hence Nāgārjuna denies self-existence or original nature, *svabhāva*, to all things—the world is empty fundamentally. This denial of a positive reality is quite unique, though the Jain holds that everything depends on everything else. However, the *Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika* and the *Mīmāṃsaka* hold that "atoms" and "selves" are real as they do not depend on anything else, the *Sāṃkhya* holds that everything depends on *Prakṛti* while the *Advaita-Vedānta* and the *Bhedābhedavādī* hold that everything depends on *brahmā* which does not depend on anything else; and the *Yogācāra* would say that everything depended on consciousness alone which in turn depends on nothing else.

Nāgārjuna's dialectics, which strongly presupposes interdependence, is an attempt by reason to delete all trust in the power of reason to solve existential philosophical problems and attain liberation; only the direct experience of *śūnyatā* can do that, but reason can perhaps show that it is meaningless to try to use reason/rationality as a stepwise path to *śūnyatā*; the only thing reason can do is to make one realise the inadequacy of reason and so become desperate enough to dare to take the final jump out into the unknown. This is achieving freedom from conceptuality/language (Krishnamurti called it "an empty small affair") by realising the limits of conceptuality and of words. But there is a vast gap between dialectics and the final insight, and this gap is at the heart of all Zen koans. This is the difficult part. So Nāgārjuna (or Zen) does not envisage philosophy as a gradual progress of accumulation of knowledge, like, e.g.

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science; philosophy is instead a deeply personal and existentialistic question determining the quality of life. So the natural result is silence and a paradoxical attitude (which to-day, perhaps, is most clearly discernible in Zen Buddhism). But this paradox runs all through these texts, yet it is most clearly expressed in the Madhyamaka view, e.g. extolling the ideal of the Bodhisattva yet simultaneously saying that there is no ideal and no Bodhisattva either.

The Relevance of Buddhist *jñāna*

When the intricate and thorny questions of definitions, influences and authorship have been settled, there remains the intriguing attempt of correlating the processes of *dhyāna*, yoga and *prāṇāyāma*, the various stages of *samadhi* as well as the precise consciousness content of such terms as *ālayavijñāna* and *vāsanā*, plus of course the fundamental states of *śūnyatā* and *nirvāṇa* with the appropriate neurochemical activity in the cortex and the subcortical structures. Beside this there will be the far more fundamental and difficult so-called binding problem, i.e. why do some neurochemical/electrical processes (neural and subneural) give rise to subjective qualia/experiences? Increasing evidence seem to suggest that the facile solution of comparing neurons to bits in on/off states and hence consciousness to a purely computational process fails. The somewhat more sophisticated solution of seeing consciousness as resulting from increasing complexity, i.e. as emerging from increasing hierarchies of interactions (where the combination or the sum of *a* and *b* somehow becomes more than *a* separated from *b*), suffers also from a kind of "*dea/deus ex machina*" syndrome, for exactly at which level does consciousness begin and how is it generated? Furthermore, both these epiphenomenalistic *ad hoc* hypotheses fail also to account for the evolutionary development of memory, intelligence and emotion. The radical solution of taking the bull by the horns would be to go along with the Buddhists and see consciousness and/or *śūnyatā* as fundamentally embedded in Nature at, or prior to, the level of space-time pre-geometry.

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Dreamless Sleep and Soul: a controversy between Vedānta and Buddhism

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ABSTRACT   *In this paper, perhaps the first of its kind, an attempt is made to elucidate and examine the Vedāntic theory of soul constructed on the basis of the experience of dreamless sleep which, being radically and qualitatively different from waking and dreaming states, is considered by the Vedāntins as a state of temporarily purified individual soul (ātman), a state of pure substantial consciousness. They take the experience of dreamless sleep as a model experience of the soul's final liberation from the body and its internal as well as external faculties. The ultimate liberation, according to the Vedāntins, is a state of total identification of the individual soul with the Universal Soul (Brahman), the summmum bonum of every Vedāntin. The paper also includes a critique of the Vedāntic soul theory by the Buddhists who vehemently deny any autonomous and substantial soul whose essence is unchangingly permanent, pure consciousness and self-illuminating knowledge. The soul is instead interpreted by the Buddhists as a product of the functioning of a person's psycho-physical organism and a mere subject of knowing, thinking, desiring, etc. The analysis further shows that the Vedānta, especially the Advaita Vedānta, metaphysics of soul is inadequate in many respects and mainly based on a priori and scriptural arguments and emotive appeals, whereas the Buddhists deny any kind of autonomous and permanent agent of knowing, thinking and desiring by successfully reducing substantial consciousness to mere acts of knowing.*

The Vedāntic Way of Thinking

The general dominating characteristic of the Upaniṣadic and the subsequent Vedāntic thinking has been to transcend the thinking itself in order to fish out the very substratum (*adhiṣṭhāna*) which is autonomous and provides support not only to thinking, but also to the whole realm of world-appearance. This is not an exercise which is performed within a common man's power and our common spatio-temporal–causal network. This is a matter of spiritual/mystical realisation in which our whole cognitive constitution, including ordinary sense and mental faculties, is kept at bay or suspended, at least temporarily. Although such realisation or experience is said by the Vedānta to be unthinkable, inconceivable and inexpressible in nature, the whole Vedānta literature, along with the ancient and modern Vedāntic thinkers, has ironically made it thinkable, conceivable and expressible. Thus it has sought to devise an empirical and conceptual method to make a case for just the opposite, which is transcendent, inconceivable, etc. The dilemma is that this has to be made possible in the conceptual framework, the only framework (although devised differently) we worldly beings are endowed with for the sake of thinking. The procedure adopted here is to collect evidences or clues from our polluted and illusory empirical and individual

experiences in which matter and consciousness participate, and to make a case for a non-empirical, *a priori* and universal principle which is from the transcendental point of view non-dual (*advaita*), absolute (*nirapekṣa*), self-evident, self-luminous (*svaprakāśa*), supreme knowledge, atemporal, unchangeably eternal (*kuṭasthanitya*), the essence of the idea of unitary soul (*ekātmapratyayasāra*) in which everything worldly loses its existence (*prapañcopaśama*), the quietude (*śānta*), and the gracious (*śiva*), and also from the empirical point of view it is the unseen (*adṛṣṭa*), the impracticable (*avyavahārya*), the ungraspable (*agrāhya*), the indefinable (*alakṣaṇa*), the unthinkable (*acintya*), and the inexpressible (*avyapadeśya*). These are the familiar locutions used to emphasise the limits of our knowledge, thinking and language.

All these negative and positive qualifications of the universal principle show that our philosophical inquiry (be it epistemological, metaphysical, ontological, semantic or ethical) in this realm is an impossibility. This is the reason why the whole Upaniṣadic thinking and its further developments, especially Advaita Vedānta, tend to be mystic in which the worldly ways of thinking, talking and acting are silenced and transcended. Philosophically, it is a kind of absolute idealism whose working method is to take an idea, howsoever non-empirical and abstract, and work it out conceptually, rationally, and consistently showing first the possibility and then finally establishing the transcendent reality as an actuality by means of logical and especially scriptural and *a priori* arguments. We can notice that in such enterprises, the concept of 'knowing' as well as the concept of 'existence' change with the change of the nature of reality, its qualitative status, and value when we proceed in our analysis from waking experiences to those of dreaming, and then to sleeping and pure consciousness. For the Advaita Vedāntins, the main criterion of the ultimate reality is that its experience can never be cancelled by any other experience (= *abādha*). It is 'the' autonomous Pure Existence (*sat*), Pure Consciousness (*cit*), Supreme Bliss (*ānanda*); or, to put it differently, it is Ultimate Truth (*satya*), Supreme Knowledge (*jñāna*), and Infinite (*ananta*). Any experience or judgement, if found cancelled or contradictory in the subsequent cognition, is taken by them as presenting false content. For example, when in a waking experience (*jāgrat*) a rope under insufficient light is mistaken for snake and again in the same epistemological situation with sufficient light in the subsequent cognition the experience of snake is cancelled (*bādha*), it is obvious that the previous cognition of snake was invalid, i.e. the snake presented was false. The reason for this false presentation, it is explained, lies in the dependence of our empirical knowledge on the unsupporting external conditions, our faulty cognitive constitution which houses incapable external sense-organs, the false-concept-forming empirical consciousness (= mind), and the intellect which makes error in making cognitive judgements. In this rope-snake case, the first judgement 'This is a snake' is cancelled, as it is found untrue, by the subsequent judgement 'This is a rope'. The cancellation of the first judgement, i.e. establishing the falsity of the appearance of snake, is performed by empirical cognition itself (*dṛṣṭatvāt mithyā*) at a subsequent stage. Since the experience of snake is found presenting a false content, it is considered lower or qualitatively inferior in value than the experience of rope in this case. The snake is empirically real, but present elsewhere, not here.

On the same line, we can show that even the rope is not irreducible and ultimately real, but this is shown not by merely cognising it at subsequent stages. For this, we need a different method following which if we unfold the rope, it is reduced to its strands and loses its name and form. In the same process, if continued, the stands can be reduced to threads and threads to further components. Now we can say that these objects— rope, strands and threads—are unreal because they have lost their names, forms, and

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identities. This is proved by means of immediate cognition itself. In this manner, the whole range of empirical things can be shown to be unreal. This is a logical-cum-perceptual method. By this process of elimination (*pariśesya-nyāya*), although it will be outside the purview of our cognitive constitution we can conceptually and logically reach that stage of reality where it is utterly unsublatable (*abādha*) in any manner and taken as the underlying principle of the whole empirical multiplicity. This is a purely conceptual, non-empirical, and *a priori* method which is vigorously, fondly, and consistently applied by the Advaitins.

Now we can take dream experience (*svapna*) in which external faculties are inoperative, but the consciousness or self, having been freed from the dependence on these faculties, creates a new world of things, partly by reviving the impressions preserved from the waking experiences and partly by creating its own things and their combinations outside the spatio-temporal–causal network. But these creations disappear and their experience is cancelled on waking. Since the dream objects are proved to be unreal, they enjoy lower status in the hierarchy of reality than their empirical counterparts. But on the other hand, the dreaming self or consciousness enjoys greater freedom as it is free from the bonds of external faculties and thus it is qualitatively higher than the waking self or consciousness.

In the Upaniṣadic and the Advaitic scheme, the next higher stage in the hierarchy is the state of dreamless sleep, or simply sleep (*nidrā, suṣupti*) in which the self sheds off its creative power too and thus is more liberated or freer than it is in the previous two states. In this state, it loses its objectifying power, intentionality, spatio-temporality, and duality. Its creative power is actually withdrawn temporarily from activity to latency (= *bīja*). Its accompanying nature of concealing (*āvaraṇa*), in the absence of projecting power (*vikṣepa*), is in its densest state. As a matter of principle, the Advaitins will not maintain that the self is endowed with concealing and projecting power. It is ignorance (*ajñāna, avidyā*) which has these powers and influences the self in waking, dreaming and sleep states in some or the other way. But what the relation is between the self and the ignorance is a very controversial issue which I need not discuss here. I shall rather discuss the implications the Advaitins derive from their analysis of the three states later.

Analysis of the *Suṣupti*-related Statements

Here are some of the important Vedāntic statements whose subsequent analysis throws light on the nature of *suṣupti*:

1. The soul is *Brahman*. It has four modes of existence, viz. waking (*jāgrat*), dreaming (*svapna*), deep sleep (*suṣupti*), and the pure consciousness (*turīya*, lit. the fourth).

2. In the waking state, both external and internal sense-organs are operative; in dreaming, only the internal is operative and also creative (= *sṛjati*). In both, the consciousness is intentional, but the nature of the intended objects are different. In the state of dreamless sleep, the self or the person is without any desire and does not experience dream. This state is unified (*ekībhūta*), i.e. in this state the intentionality of consciousness and duality or plurality of the waking and dreaming states are dissolved. It is in fact a mass of consciousness or knowledge (*prajñānaghana*) and bliss (*ānandamaya*).

3. In the sleep state, the reason for the suspension of conscious activity is all-round ignorance which puts a stop to the vibrations (*manaḥspandana*) and subject-

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object-bifurcating function (= *dvaitajāta*) of consciousness by temporarily covering it. In waking and dreaming states, the vibrations of the empirical consciousness are at play, but since in the sleep state they are temporarily suspended the self loses its differentiating power (*avivekanūpa*). For this reason, it is called a unified mass of consciousness or knowledge (*ekībhūta-prajñānaghana*), just as in the darkness of the night the world of multiplicity becomes a mass of darkness (*ghanībhūta*) because in the absence of light our differentiating cognitions are not possible.

The *suṣupti* state, as we have seen, is called *prajñānaghana*, literally a mass of intuitive or super knowledge which is unlike the consciousness of the waking and the dreaming states in which mind-generated dichotomy of knower and knowable, and the related desire and the resultant suffering dominate life. Śaṃkara's belief or assumption is that the worldly life in which all external and internal faculties are operative is nothing but a life of bondage, ignorance, and suffering, and once their operations are suspended, as in deep sleep, albeit temporarily, the self achieves the state of freedom from suffering. Thus the absence of suffering makes the *suṣupti* a blissful state. This state is considered all at once a mass of supreme knowledge, ignorance, and bliss. But how is it a state of knowledge (*prājña*) if the self is completely covered with ignorance and the functions of external and internal faculties are suspended? Śaṃkara argues that since in this state the self is the knower of the past and the future, and also of everything else, it is called a state of *prājña*. Here Śaṃkara uses his presuppositions as his argument. According to this argument, on interpretation, there is consciousness which crosses the limits of present which is epistemologically the only realm for confrontation of the knowable and the knower, and the emergence of resultant knowledge. Śaṃkara's argument places the past and the future, which are by definition 'gone for ever' and 'yet to come' respectively, in the state of present, thus converting them into the present. This creates epistemological and ontological impossibility and conceptual contradictions, for the self achieves the sleep state only by dissolving or suspending the temporality and objectivity of the empirical world, its own intentionality and creativity, and functions of external and internal faculties, thus forgetting the past and suspending its possible future activities. As a matter of fact, for the self, nothing other than itself exists in this state as the Vedāntins including Śaṃkara maintain.

Again, Śaṃkara following Gauḍapāda has called the sleep state a state of knowledge (*prājña*) which is radically and qualitatively different from the knowledge/awareness/experience of the waking and the dream states caused by means of external and internal faculties respectively. Since this knowledge falls outside the purview of all cognitive faculties and conceptual apparatus, no philosophical inquiry will be possible. Śaṃkara realises this difficulty and therefore, in order to prove his point, takes recourse to the scriptural statements, explanatory presuppositions, *a priori* arguments, and empirical analogies, all of which show his emotive religious drive and escapism from hard but uncomfortable empirical evidences and their neutral analysis.

For Gauḍapāda, there is a gradation of purity and freedom starting from the waking state, which is the least pure and free. In the dream state, the self enjoys greater freedom and purity as the fetters of the external sense-organs are inoperative, although it creates its own world in which the internal faculty is operative. In *suṣupti*, the self is free from the shackles of both sets of organs. For the self, it is a state of self-luminosity, peace, tranquillity, and bliss. This is confirmed by memory when the sleeping person awakes. The *suṣupti* state is considered a temporary prototype of the transcendental

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consciousness (*turīya*) as both are unitary and lack the cognition of duality. But the former is said to contain the seeds of the waking and dreaming consciousness to which it is brought back, whereas the latter is unreturnable, i.e. the person is finally liberated even during empirical life. This state is arrived at by following the same process of conceptual elimination (*pāriśesya-nyāya*) of the earlier three states. Further, it is said that in sleep state the self and ignorance are in complete union just as a husband and his wife who are in duality before union or intercourse, but during union they forget their separate individuality and are completely absorbed in the state of pleasure.

It is difficult to understand how the self in *suṣupti* state retains its power of 'seeing' while at the same time being completely covered under the mass of ignorance and also being devoid of external as well as internal faculties. In this state, it is replied, the self loses its differentiating power (*viveka*) as there is no duality, the 'other' for seeing. Even then it is called 'seer', because it sees itself, i.e. it is self-luminous, as the sun shines itself. This explanation is problematic. For any kind of philosophical inquiry, or understanding, or meaningful talk, 'seeing' presupposes a (sense) faculty, an object, and the seer. 'Seeing' is a relative term which is intelligible only when at least these three factors are present.

Analysis of the Advaita Theses

Now, I analyse the following theses and the supporting justifications advanced by the Advaitins:

1. There is a non-dual, unchangingly eternal, and universal principle which is established on the basis of individual experiences, scriptural testimony, and *a priori* arguments. There are many experiencing individuals but only one absolute principle.

2. Since in the sleep state all faculties are inoperative and the knowables are absent, the self is left with itself and said to know 'nothing' in relation to the empirical and dream objects. Only in this sense can it be said to be covered with ignorance. This sleep-cum-ignorance state, in the epistemological sense, is latently potent as it has the potentiality of making sense-faculties, mind, and intellect functional on its coming back to waking and dream states. Remember that in the dream state the external faculties are still inoperative. The *turīya* state is in a real sense free from this potentiality and thus irreversible and finally free. This is the *summum bonum* of the Advaitins. In this sense the *suṣupti* state is lower in quality, value, and hierarchy than the *turīya* state. Further, the state of knowing 'nothing' in the *suṣupti* state is the state of knowing the undifferentiated itself. Therefore, this state is a mass of knowledge (*prajñānaghana*) which is superior to the knowledge acquired in either waking or dream state.

3. The Advaitins think that the empirical dream states arouse desire for false objects which fail to provide lasting happiness and thus cause frustration, suffering, and bondage. In the sleep state, the self is dissociated from such desires and objects. Consequently, it is free from suffering which is a state of Supreme Bliss (*ānanda, samprasāda*).

4. It is said that in the sleep state the self is self-luminous (*jyotiṣaḥ puruṣaḥ*, see *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, 4.3.7) which is its essential and true nature. The self-luminosity of the self is present in the waking and dream states also, but because of the web of the objective world created by ignorance through external and

internal faculties, it is not self-conscious or self-evident. The self-luminosity of the self makes its existence identical with supreme knowledge and bliss. It is rather considered or presupposed, in the empirical sense, the very substratum or underlying principle and a necessary condition of all types of waking and dream experiences. It is a being which after withdrawing itself from these experiences, in the process of elimination, is left as non-dual.

5. Śaṃkara establishes the eternal continuity of the pure-consciousness on the basis of memory we have, as for example, on waking after sleep one remembers in the present the state before sleep. The sleep state is therefore a continuity of pure-consciousness, not a break between the two states of before and after the sleep. Not only this, the sleep state is also a state of blissful experience (*ānandabhuktathā prājñaḥ*, see *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*, 1.3).

The argument of the Advaitin like Śaṃkara in favour of his thesis that 'the sleep state is a state of bliss' is based on one's self-awareness and self-assertion: 'I slept happily and I do not remember anything of that state'. (*sukham aham asvāpsaṃ na kiṃcid avediṣaṃ iti*, see *Śaṃkara-bhāṣya* on *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, 4.3.5) on waking from the dreamless sleep. From this the following theses are derived:

1. The sleep state is a continuity of the self, it is not a loss of consciousness.
2. The sleep state is a state of experience, it is not a break of awareness or consciousness.
3. The sleep state is not an ordinary experience, but an experience of Supreme Bliss as there is no desire and suffering in it.
4. The sleep state is a knowledge of 'nothing'.
5. The sleep state is a state of self-luminosity.

Among these theses, only the first one, according to which the consciousness is devoid of intentionality, seems logically possible, though epistemologically and empirically it is impossible to establish. The remaining ones are propounded only on the basis of *a priori* arguments, scriptural statements, and empirical analogies which are all guided by metaphysical and religious presuppositions. Here the jump from empirical to *a priori*, multiplicity to non-duality, non-awareness (in sleep) to self-luminosity, a mere feeling of relaxed physical and mental condition in the present to the bliss state of the past sleep, memory-as-reproduction-of-experience to memory-as-first-order-knowledge-instrument (*pramāṇa*) are all justified in the Advaita philosophy. Sometimes it takes a non-cognitive or emotive belief as a knowledge-claim.

It is worth noting here that in the Upaniṣads the deep sleep, a property of soul, is said to be caused by excessive physical tiredness, a property of body. Just as a bird, after having been tired because of remaining throughout the day in the field, returns to its nest for rest. Here the soul is compared to the bird. This shows that deep sleep is because of the excessive tiredness of the body, not a natural state of the soul. Besides, the Vedāntins, ancient and modern, either do not explain or are unable to explain the loss of consciousness in the state of fatigue (and such loss caused under the influence of anesthesia or alcohol). Moreover, for Advaitins, what is conceivable is inferable, and what is thus inferable is knowable and real. This seems to be the argument advanced by K.C. Bhattacharya when he says:

> When a man rises from dreamless sleep, he becomes aware that he had a blissful sleep during which he was conscious of nothing. This he knows directly from memory. Now memory is only of a presentation. Therefore the

bliss and the consciousness of nothing must have been *presented* during the sleep. If it be objected that only the *absence* during sleep of disquiet and knowledge is *inferred* from a memory of the state before the sleep and the perception of the state after sleep, it is asked in reply: can we *infer* anything, the like of which was never presented? If reasoning is only a manipulation of rarefied images, the images can have been derived only from percepts. But it may be urged that the negative concept, at any rate, could not have had any percept corresponding to it, and therefore one may justifiably hold the *absence* of knowledge and disquiet during sleep to have been inferred. To this it is replied that absence cannot be inferred, unless it be conceivable. The absence of knowledge cannot be referred to, unless the absence be the object of a direct consciousness of it *during the absence*. Like knowledge, the absence of knowledge cannot be known by external perception or any form of inference founded on it, but by internal perception or self-feeling. No *inference* can ever warrant us in attributing absence of consciousness to any object. If the paradox were allowed, a psychic thing or absence of a psychic thing, if conceived, is actual: its *esse* is its *percipi*—a peculiarity of hypothesis in Psychology which deserves to be noticed. (pp. 18–19)

This makes sense but does not establish and refer to the reality of non-dual, self-luminous, pure-consciousness, and universal nature. Merely talking conceptually in a consistent manner does not prove an ontological reality. The difference between sense and reference can be taken into consideration in this context. Further, an Advaitin like K.C. Bhattacharya can even go to the extent of taking memory as presentational in character, which does not only present the bliss and consciousness of nothing belonging to the past but also a definitely and positively structured content as Truth, Knowledge and Bliss, etc. He admits the role of psychology in the experience of such reality. In that case, one can ask, how is this a kind of experience different from the one under superimposition (*adhyāsa*) in which case the subjective confusion, psychological in nature, is at full play? One fails to understand.

The Unanswered Questions

Further, there are some questions which the sleep-consciousness theorists like Śaṃkara fail to answer convincingly:

1. If the nature of reality is non-dual, eternal, and unchanging, why do we experience objective plurality in the waking experience and seeming objective plurality in the dream experience?
2. What constitutes these two kinds of plurality?
3. What is the relationship between the non-dual pure-consciousness (*advaita cit*) and its false creations and projections (*sṛjana*) considered as its vibrations (*spandana*)?
4. What is the relationship between the pure-consciousness and the nescience (*avidyā*) which has the dual functions of concealing (*āvaraṇa*) and creating/projecting/superimposing (*vikṣepa*) in the waking and dream states while it has only the concealing function (*āvaraṇa*) in the sleep states?
5. What is the justification for taking the absence of objective knowledge, in the sleep state, as the knowledge of 'nothing' as a positive entity?

6. How can one philosophically justify the lack of any awareness, in the sleep state, as the awareness of self-luminosity?

7. How can an intentional consciousness, in the waking and the dream states, become unintentional and self-luminous in the sleep state and again regain its intentionality after waking? Where does this intentionality come from and go to?

Buddhist Critique of Soul-theory

Buddhism in general is known for its severe opposition to the belief in any substance called soul as the agent of all sorts of cognitive and psychological acts, so much so that in the Vedāntic tradition it is considered the substratum (*adhiṣṭhāna*) of all world appearances. This belief is undermined by the Buddha and the Buddhists by epistemological and hermeneutic analysis. First, they show that such beliefs in a metaphysical entity are the product of cultural, religious and conceptual contexts in which they are present pre-structured and the holy scriptures (*śruti*) are firmly believed to be revelatory of 'ontic' meaning ignoring its purely semantic character. Second, it is also believed that everything said in the holy scriptures is recorded only after the realised souls (*ṛṣi*) have directly experienced the truth. The believers also take them as containing eternally true propositions and eternally valid knowledge by acquaintance which reveals the truly existential reality like soul and *Brahman*. In the Buddhist analysis, such beliefs and the claimed corresponding experiences are shown to be not only purely psychological and speculative, but also dangerous as they cause incurable and endless suffering to humanity and survive on human ignorance about the truth.

The Buddhist approach in this context is phenomenological in a sense that it proceeds with the immediacy of the 'given', passes through the realisation of the self evolution and structuring of consciousness, and ends with the hollowness of the *a priori*. It also discovers that 'rationality' is born out of this and assigns to itself the exclusive right of explaining the 'truth' of one and all. Further, Buddhism propounds the process view of reality and its continuity every moment of which is dependently originated (*pratītyasamutpanna*). It takes consciousness not as the ground of Pure Being and phenomenal appearances, but as an act of being conscious which can never be transcended in order to find a posited ground like soul or *Brahman*. The Buddhists explain the whole phenomena of personality, soul, knowledge-claims, linguistic and conceptual behaviour, and waking, dream and sleep experiences, and the like in terms of the functioning of the psycho-physical organism which is in perpetual flux or process permeated with dispositional tendencies (*saṃskāra, vāsanā*).

The soul-theorists, on the other hand, cite the facts of personal continuity, memory, recognition, unity of cognitions and thought, self-consciousness, desire, and the experience of pleasure and pain, etc. which, they argue, can be explained only when a sustained subject like soul is maintained. The Śaṃkarites, the Cartesian 'Cogito', and the Kantian 'transcendental unity of apperception' have in modern time further strengthened the belief in this substantial soul. The Buddhists reduce this posited soul and its above properties to 'I-ing' (*ahaṃkāra*) and 'mine-ing' (*mamakāra*), causally conditioned (*pratītyasamutpanna*) but separate acts of consciousness flowing in quick succession (*saṃtāna*), and certain constituent factors classified differently as five aggregates (*skandha*), 12 spheres (*āyatana*), and 18 elements (*dhātu*), without assuming any permanent ground or eternal and conscious threading principle.

In the Buddhist literature, we do not find any discussion of the dreamless sleep (*suṣupti*) as a state of soul. Buddhism does discuss the dream experiences which are

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caused by certain disturbances in the functioning of the psychophysical organism, but denies the reality of soul. On this basis we can formulate the Buddhist arguments against dreamless sleep as a model experience of the transcendental, eternal, and universal reality like *Brahman*. But when the soul itself is denied, the question of its various states including *suṣupti* does not arise.

Buddhism maintains the distinction, so far as the semantic meaning is concerned, between consciousness as pure ground of psychological acts and consciousness as mere act of knowing. Whereas the former is an imaginative and false construction (*abhūtaparikalpa*), the latter is an experienced fact. Even clubbing of these acts of knowing does not ontologically produce or reveal the One, Eternal, Universal Consciousness as Pure Being and the Ground of all psychological acts and world-appearances. According to Buddhism, this belief in a soul is purely psychological in nature as opposed to the so-called cognitive belief which is also not ultimately substantial, objective, and mind-neutral; it is rather disposition-loaded and a false security-giving device. The Buddha maintains that such beliefs feed on the blind faith (*saddhā*), the so-called revelatory scriptures (*anussava*), choice (*ruci*) containing dispositional elements, and the discursive and reflective thoughts on form (*ākāraparivitakka*), and 'the acceptance of solidified views (*diṭṭhinijjhānakkhanti*)'. (see Kalupahana, p. 6). He says:

> ... even if I know something on the basis of the profoundest reflection on form, that may be empty, hollow and false, while what I do not know on the basis of the profoundest reflection on form may be factual, true and not otherwise. It is not proper for an intelligent person, safeguarding the truth, to come categorically to the conclusion in this matter that this alone is true and whatever else is false. (*Majjhimanikāya* 2.170, quoted & tr. in Kalupahana, p. 7)

In Buddhism, especially in early Buddhism, Mādhyamika and Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda, the metaphysical status of personality (*pudgala*) and metaphysical ground of empirical phenomena (*dharma*) are reduced to the sensuous experiences and their derivatives. The Vedāntic pure consciousness is explained away and instead consciousness is explained in terms of six kinds of consciousnesses (*vijñāna*) which are mere acts of knowing arising from certain factors interacting with each other and which undergo conceptual evolution (*vijñānapariṇāma*). The feeling of the continuity is nothing but the flux of thus-arisen consciousnesses unable to be grasped separately. Thus, visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, and mental consciousnesses arise from the contacts of eye and material form, ear and sound, nose and smell, tongue and taste, body and tangible, and mind and concepts respectively. With the introduction of self-consciousness in this process, a sense of ego (*ahaṃkāra*, as the subject of knowing, etc.) and mine (*mamakāra*, as the possessor or ground of knowing, etc.) arise. At this level, so many other factors like an obsessive faith in a metaphysical substratum, and a dispositional choice of basic elements for system-construction, and discursive thinking creep in. The whole human personality, according to Buddhism, is nothing more than the effectively functional psycho-physical organism. The whole endeavour of the Buddha and Buddhism is to make one realise one's own personality and existence in terms of these unenduring and dependently arisen factors which are various functions, but when taken together they constitute human personality without any real abiding agent or principle. A passage from the *Madhupiṇḍikā-sutta* reads:

Depending upon the visual sense and the visible object, O brethren, arises

visual consciousness; coming together of these three is contact; depending upon contact arises feeling. What one feels one perceives; what one perceives, one reasons about. What one reasons about, one is obsessed with. Due to such obsession, a person is assailed by obsessed perceptions and concepts in regard to visible objects cognizable by the visual organ, belonging to the past, the future and the present. (*Majjhimanikāya*, 1.111–112 quoted & tr. in Kalupahana, p. 32.)

The Buddhist in his epistemological analysis of empirical experiences exposes the psychological factors involved in any knowledge-claim, the human tendency to transcend what is given in the sensuous experiences, and the belief that non-sensuous intuitive experience is the only truly authentic mode of knowing and revelatory of transcendent reality. Their analysis shows that our empirical experience starts with immediate sensuous experience which is subsequently joined by self-awareness, memory involving linguistic and cultural learning, and dispositional and reflective tendencies which all together give birth to the whole range of ontologically neutral conceptualisation. This is nothing but an abstract and endless evolution of consciousness (*vijñānapariṇāma*) which is set into motion after one becomes conscious of a concept formed at the end of the process of sensuous experience. In such a situation, any belief or postulation of a substantive soul is a mere imagination (*abhūtaparikalpa*).

Further, in the case of a sensuous experience, seeing (*darśana*), for instance, is a mere cognitive act (*kriyā*) dependently arising from the contact of visual sense and visible form as we conventionally think. Then, this act is directed toward the self as its substratum and possessor. A blind, lazy, and insecure mind thinks in this manner of speaking, which if extended can assign substance-status to what is in one context a mere property. In the present context, the act of seeing is a property of soul, but this act in the form of property can be converted into substance if one changes the manner of speaking. That will be the manner in which a substantial entity is talked about. Thus, one can say that this act is short or long in duration, vague or clear, intelligible or unintelligible, etc. These are the predicates of the 'act' under consideration. In this manner, the property-act becomes substance-act which is an ontologically neutral product of our conceptual and discursive thinking. This is made clear from the Buddhist analysis of our perceptual and conceptual processes.

It is an important fact to note that our understanding of any experience, concept or linguistic term is never understood in isolation of other experiences, concepts, and linguistic terms. Now any act as property is intelligible only in relation to that which is non-act, such as an enduring and possessor substance. Similarly, in brief, seeing-act is understood only in relation to eye, the material form, and the seeing agent, although we can further conceptually elaborate them *ad infinitum*. In Buddhism, all this is explained as the result of the metaphysically and ontologically barren conceptualisation. In the Mādhyamika, the mutual dependence or dependently arising character of a being (*bhāva*) is taken as possessing no self-same nature (*svabhāva*). This refutes the claim of any self-same substantial reality beyond knowing acts.

From the preceding analysis it follows that seeing-agent is born only when seeing-act, seeing-faculty eye and seeable-object are born in the stream of evolutionary consciousness. We presume a seer soul only as a matter of conventional and logical necessity. Epistemologically, we can never transcend a cognitive act, and the conventional and logical necessity cannot establish the ontological status of soul. There are some philosophers who take such necessity as an important philosophical factor in

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philosophising this kind of metaphysical reality. But the Buddhists do not subscribe to this way of philosophising because of its inherent impotency and purely speculative nature. Nāgārjuna says:

> Act of seeing [as a matter of fact] does not see itself [i.e. its own structure as it would be contradictory for the act of seeing to see itself]. [Thus], how can that which does not see itself sees other things? (*Madhyamakakārikā*, III.2; hereafter MK)

It is clear from this *Kārikā* and the one following it alongwith Candrakīrti's commentary in the *Prasannapadā* that the Mādhyamikas try to show that the very talk of a substantial agent of seeing apart from the act of seeing in non-sensical. Applying his characteristic method of dialectic, Nāgārjuna argues that in order to establish the independent status of an agent (*kāraka*) like soul, its self-same existence without any context of the act of seeing, doing, etc. must be proved and understood first. But on analysis we find that such a thesis is logically self-contradictory, cognitively vacuous and transcendentally impossible to reach. It is even unintelligible and non-sensical. The argument against a substantial agent of seeing, doing, etc. proceeds as follows:

> First, the name agent (*kāraka*) is derived only when someone, who is said to exist self-same, is conjoined with an act (*kriyā*). Now for conceptual clarity, it is necessary that the concept 'agent' is understood as either identical with the act itself or wholly different from it. In the former alternative, it is reduced to activity and in the second, it is shown unrelated to the activity losing its very name and identity as 'agent'; or, if it is said to exist prior to act, then the very arising of the concept of 'agent' becomes impossible. The soul-theorists, like common man's unanalytical thinking, mix up these opposed alternatives in order to form a unified concept of a substantial, appropriating, conscious, knowing, doing, and desiring agent.

Now let us take a psychological state like desire (*rāga*) which is said to have its substratum in the one who desires (*rakta*). The Mādhyamika (MK, VI.1) argues: 'If the one who desires exists prior to his act of desiring, divorced from and devoid of desiring, then in that case the desire would depend on the one who is already divorced from desire'. This will lead to a separate existence of the act of desiring and the one who desires. In this case, this independent desiring agent when involved in the act of desiring will acquire a new name 'the desiring desiring-agent'—a sheer non-sense and also leading to *infinite regress*. The whole confusion arises when the desiring agent is assigned a separate and self-same ontological/metaphysical status different from the acts of desiring.

The Mādhyamika is not a sceptic denying the conventionally accepted external world, rather he is a realist in this sphere; but he does deny the substantial self-same nature of this world and the Vedāntic notion of a metaphysical cogito or a unifying principle of our cognitive and psychological acts in the form of soul. He maintains that concept-generated beings arise in dependence of other such beings and so they are devoid of self-same existence (cf. *Prasannapadā* on MK, p. 79.13–14: *vayaṃ tu pratītyotpannatvāt sarvabhāvānāṃ svabhāvam eva nopalabhāmahe*). A *world* of such things *is* the product of our perceptual and conceptual processes. About such speculated things and their existence or non-existence, left to himself, he would prefer silence (MK, IX.12). Moreover, it is not possible to find a suitable, sensible, and justified way

of speaking of a determinate person who exists prior to the acts of seeing, hearing, etc. (cf. MK, IX.3).

According to Vasubandhu, the feeling of self is generated by the defiled mind (cf. *Madhyāntavibhāgabhāṣya*, p. 14: *ātmapratibhāsaṃ kliṣṭaṃ manam*) which is permeated with and guided by self-view, self-love, self-esteem, and self-confusion (cf. Ibid.: *ātmamohādisamprayogāt*; also see *Triṃśikā, kārikā* 6). Both the Mādhyamika and Vasubandhu maintain that it is the appropriating activity of mind which is responsible for generating the concept of self. For mind's activity, it is not necessary that the external world is presented to it. It functions even on self-generated objects which are nothing but concepts and their network. Mind, in Vasubandhu, is a stage in the evolution of consciousness which is the cause of the birth of object-consciousness and its further development. In deep sleep state, the empirical consciousness and its evolution are absent; therefore, in this case, any kind of objectifying and determining agent like mind is also absent, although the unbroken stream of dispositional tendencies are still in existence but not manifested. These tendencies are very obvious in waking and dream states. The issue of memory, after deep sleep is over, can be explained in the above way. The whole endeavour of the Buddha, Nāgārjuna, Maitreya, and the later Vasubandhu is to show the non-substantiality of the external as well as the internal world. Their purpose is to enlighten others about the impermanence and dependent arising of all types of existence including human existence. This realisation, they believe, helps transform one's personality for global ethical behaviour.

Concluding Remarks

Now I conclude. The Upaniṣadic and the Advaita epistemology and rationality, and for that matter their whole thinking, are guided by their metaphysical and religious presuppositions, the clues for which they find in empirical illusory experiences and their cancellation in some way or the other. Their analysis is all at once epistemological, logical, metaphysical, and religious. For them, the waking and the dream experiences fall under the purview of empirical/epistemological/phenomenological analysis, whereas the sleep state, which lies beyond such analysis, is analysed on scriptural, religious and *a priori* grounds. They jump from the former to the latter by declaring the former as mere appearance and thus false. They derive ultimate truth from what is ultimately untruth. They deny ultimate ontological status to what is given in the objectively empirical experience and confer the ultimate true ontological status to what is thus not given. They proceed from knowledge-disclaim of the empirical world to the ultimately true knowledge-claim of the non-duality. They show discontinuity of the empirical world and arrive at the unchangeably eternal continuity of the non-empirical. They create two realms of reality, knowledge and value by creating a radically qualitative difference between them. That is why they have different tools and rationality to deal with them. As a matter of fact, their whole journey is conceptual, religious and emotive. They talk of transcending the sense–mind–intellect–body–space–time–cause–karmic system while remaining in it, just as a fish which, while remaining and swimming in deep water, would talk of its experience of climbing Everest. All this is made possible because of their particular ontological commitment and ignorance of the distinction between a theory of sense and a theory of reference. This problem is found throughout all Indian philosophy barring Buddhism. J.N. Mohanty (1992, p. 13) has raised this issue along with the issue of a theory of constitution and discussed them in the context of Indian philosophy. Some attempts have been made by the Buddhist, Śaiva system,

Rāmānuja, Bhartṛhari, Aurobindo and others to rectify the mistakes and the difficulties arising from the Upaniṣadic and Advaita thinking, but this is outside the purview of this paper for discussion.

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Buddhism, Abortion and the Middle Way

ROY W. PERRETT

ABSTRACT   *What have modern Buddhist ethicists to say about abortion and is there anything to be learned from it? A number of writers have suggested that Buddhism (particularly Japanese Buddhism) does indeed have something important to offer here: a response to the dilemma of abortion that is a 'middle way' between the pro-choice and pro-life extremes that have polarised the western debate. I discuss what this suggestion might amount to and present a defence of its plausibility.*

Abortion is clearly one of the most controversial and divisive contemporary moral problems, a problem that has of late greatly exercised western religious ethicists. What, however, have modern Buddhist ethicists to say about the issue, and is there anything to be learned from it? A number of writers have suggested that Buddhism does indeed have something important to offer here: a response to the dilemma of abortion that is a 'middle way' between the pro-choice and pro-life extremes that have polarised the western debate. I begin with a brief review of some features of the contemporary situation in Buddhist Asia (particularly Japan), then seek to analyse this material with respect to claims that Buddhism offers a viable 'middle way' on abortion. This analysis will in turn require some consideration of the nature of moral dilemmas, of the significance of moral remainders and the emotions of self-assessment, and of the possibility of conflicts between moral requirements and moral ideals.

I

Central to traditional Buddhist ethics are the Five Precepts (*pañcasīla*), the first of which is an undertaking to observe the rule to abstain from taking life. Notwithstanding this prohibition on killing and a traditional embryology that implies that the fetus is a living being from the point of conception, there is – surprisingly enough – no explicit prohibition of abortion to be found in the most ancient Pali scriptures of the Theravādin school, though the monastic disciplinary code in the later *Vinayapiṭaka* does explicitly forbid the involvement of monks and nuns in the practice, and the *Jātakas* and other mythological texts warn of the dire karmic consequences attendant upon abortion.[1] Nevertheless it is certainly true that many contemporary Theravādin Buddhists, particularly monastics, disapprove of abortion as a violation of the precept against taking life. Moreover the situation is not too different in the Mahāyāna traditions of Tibetan Buddhism, even though the Tibetans follow an alternative Mūlasarvāstivādin *Vinaya*.[2] (As we shall see, this general pattern is rather less marked in East Asian Mahāyāna Buddhism.)

When we turn from text to context, however, we find in modern Buddhist Asia a remarkable toleration of the practice of abortion.[3] In Thailand, for example, where over

90 per cent of the population are Theravādin Buddhists, the abortion rate is some 50 per cent higher than the US figure for the equivalent number of citizens. True, most of these abortions, though readily available, are technically illegal. But opinion polls also indicate that the majority of Thais believe both that abortion is immoral and that it ought to be more extensively legalised.[4]

The situation in Mahāyāna Taiwan is analogous in many respects: a traditional Buddhist disapproval of abortion, very restrictive abortion laws, but a widespread and tolerated practice of abortion.[5] Much the same situation obtains in Korea, where not only is the national abortion rate very high, but where the rate among Buddhists is as high or higher than that of the rest of the population.[6] In Japan, the abortion rate is also very high (officially 22.6 per 1000 women of child-bearing age, though probably in reality nearer 65–90). However, there abortion laws are very liberal too, while contraception (especially the Pill) is not so readily available.

This apparent discrepancy between text and context may seem unremarkable: after all, Buddhists would be by no means unique if they sometimes do what they ought not to according to their own religious precepts. But modern advocates of a Buddhist middle way on abortion seem to want to claim that something deeper is happening here. The Thai bioethicist Pinit Ratanakul, for instance, refers to 'the Thai "middle way" … between the extreme positions found in Western views', a view which recognises that 'in some situations … abortion cannot be perceived as an either/or option'.[7] Helen Tworkov, editor of the Buddhist magazine *Tricycle*, suggests that Buddhism involves 'taking both sides' on the anti-abortion/pro-choice issue.[8] Ken Jones' popular book *The Social Face of Buddhism* describes abortion as a 'dilemma' involving Buddhism's dual commitment, on the one hand, to refraining from killing and, on the other hand, to expressing compassion for the pregnant woman.[9]

The Japanese Buddhist tradition has been particularly influential here. The American Zen master Robert Aitken criticises 'over-simplified positions of pro-life and pro-choice' that fail to 'touch the depths of the dilemma', referring approvingly to the Japanese practice of *mizuko kuyō*, a Buddhist memorial service for aborted children.[10] William LaFleur, a scholar who has extensively studied this practice in recent years, enthusiastically commends it as a response to the abortion issue from which the West might learn.[11] LaFleur suggests it is an interesting exemplar of the way in which Japanese 'societal pragmatism' has achieved a consensus on abortion, forefronting the need for a solution without tearing the social fabric apart. In contrast to the western tendency to represent the abortion issue as involving only two irreconcilable alternatives (pro-life or pro-choice), Japanese Buddhism offers a 'third option – perhaps a middle way between the others'.[12]

The Japanese practice of *mizuko kuyō* is a Buddhist memorial service for children (*mizuko* is literally 'water-child') who have died before their parents, including children who have died as a result of spontaneous or induced abortion, as well as stillborn children or those who have died prematurely.[13] Given the huge number of abortions performed in Japan since the post-war legalisation of such operations, the majority of these *mizuko* are aborted fetuses. Ritual prayers and offerings are made in memory of the departed 'water-children' and parents (particularly mothers) offer apologies to them. The practice permits a ritualised expression of guilt for the regrettable, though perhaps unavoidable, act of abortion.

Although the upsurge in the present day form of the ritual dates only from the 1950s and the practice came in for some public criticism in the 1980s, today it occurs everywhere in Japan and goes largely unremarked. In this way, a kind of public

consensus on abortion has been reached in Buddhist Japan, whereby the act is neither forbidden nor treated lightly. In the West the abortion debate has often polarised into a pro-life camp which insists that the fetus is a being with a moral status equivalent to that of a fully grown child, and a pro-choice camp which consequently feels compelled to refuse to acknowledge that the fetus is anything but so much living tissue. In contrast, the Japanese regard the aborted fetus as a kind of 'child' that, due to other pressing circumstances, has been 'returned'. Consequently they are able to make room for the ritual public acknowledgment of the strong emotions of regret and guilt that a woman may feel after an abortion, even when that abortion is thought to have been unavoidable. In other words, Japanese Buddhists seek to walk a kind of 'middle way' between the conflicting pro-life and pro-choice alternatives, a way that attempts to give full moral weight to the competing values of both life and choice.

The practice of *mizuko kuyō* is nowadays so well established in Japan that Buddhists elsewhere have begun to follow suit. As already mentioned, the Zen master Robert Aitken has taken over the ritual for use by American practitioners, skilfully reinterpreting it for the western context.[14] Moreover in Korea Buddhists have recently begun to express a concern for aborted fetuses and demand Buddhist memorial services for them, though of a distinctively Korean form.[15] The practice does not seem to have caught on yet in the Theravādin world, but Thai Buddhists already have available to them more private rituals to acknowledge guilt and improve the karmic situation of the aborted fetus.[16]

Not everyone, however, is unreservedly impressed by all this.[17] Few would want to dispute the potential psychological utility of *mizuko kuyō* as an aid in the grieving and healing process, but it is much less clear how the ritual acknowledgement of the strong emotions a woman might have about her aborted fetus represents a morally significant 'middle way' with respect to the supposed 'dilemma' of abortion. Indeed, if the First Precept prohibits taking life and the fetus is conceded to be a living being, then where is the moral *dilemma*? And does not the guilt acknowledged by the grieving woman in the ritual itself imply her·belief that she has acted wrongly?

Clearly it is important here to begin by clarifying just what the dilemma of abortion is supposed to be, such that Buddhism offers a middle way. In ordinary usage the term 'moral dilemma' may just mean any kind of moral problem. But philosophers usually understand a moral dilemma to be a situation in which an agent morally ought to do two (or more) alternate actions, but cannot do both (or all) of them together. That there are *apparent* moral dilemmas is indisputable: persuasive arguments can often be given for incompatible alternatives on a number of moral issues, including abortion. But to show there are moral conflicts in this sense does not establish that there are *genuine* moral dilemmas, i.e. conflicting moral obligations which cannot be resolved by one of the requirements being justifiably overridden by another.

But perhaps when the authors cited earlier refer to the 'dilemma' of abortion they mean no more than the *apparent* dilemma of abortion; after all, the moral philosopher's special use of 'dilemma' is very much a term of art. This understanding of our authors' meaning, however, would imply that they are really making much less interesting claims for the Buddhist contribution to the abortion debate than it might have appeared at first sight. Correspondingly, I suggest it is first worth pursuing a bit further the proposal that there really is a 'dilemma' of abortion to which Buddhism is responding.

It is interesting to note in this connection that the philosopher and logician, Ruth Barcan Marcus, herself perfectly familiar with the special philosophical use of 'di-

lemma', has argued that the controversies surrounding non-spontaneous abortion suggest the issue is indeed a genuine dilemma:

> Philosophers are often criticized for inventing bizarre examples and counterex-
> amples to make a philosophical point. But no contrived example can equal the
> complexity and the puzzles generated by the actual circumstances of foetal
> conception, parturition, and the ultimate birth of a human being ... There are
> arguments that recognize competing claims ... [and] various combinations of
> such arguments are proposed ... What all the arguments seem to share is the
> assumption that there is, despite uncertainty, a resolution without residue;
> that there is a correct set of metaphysical claims, principles, and priority
> rankings of principles which will justify the choice. Then, given the belief that
> one choice is justified, assignment of guilt relative to the overridden alternative
> is seen as inappropriate, and feelings of guilt or pangs of conscience are viewed
> as, at best sentimental. But as one tries to unravel the tangle of arguments, it
> is clear that to insist that there is in every case a solution without residue is
> false to the moral facts.[18]

Notable here is Marcus' appeal to the supposed existence of moral residues (including emotions like guilt or remorse) after every choice in the matter as evidence that abortion is a genuine dilemma, a situation where each alternative violates a moral requirement. But these emotions of self-assessment are apparently the very same sorts of emotions involved in the *mizuko kuyō* ritual. Does the existence of such emotions there too support the claim that the Buddhist ritual is a response to a genuine dilemma of abortion? To answer this question we need to investigate further the nature of moral dilemmas.

II

The first point to note is that Marcus' claim that abortion represents a genuine moral dilemma is one that runs counter to the majority tradition in western ethics. Most western moral philosophers, whatever their disagreements on other matters, have agreed that there can be no moral dilemmas.[19] This is, for instance, common ground for both Kantians and utilitarians; it is also true for Aristotelian virtue theory (since the unity of the virtues precludes conflict among the virtues) and for Thomistic natural law theory. Moreover, in addition to arguments against the possibility of dilemmas that appeal to various special features of those competing ethical theories, there are also a couple of arguments that try to derive contradictions from the usual definition of a moral dilemma in a way that is independent of commitment to any particular ethical theory. If these latter arguments are sound then Marcus must be wrong about the abortion case and there could be no dilemma of abortion in the first place. Hence *a fortiori* there could be no room for a Buddhist 'middle way' that is a response to it.

The first of these arguments against the possibility of moral dilemmas applies the familiar principle that 'ought' implies 'can' to the dilemma case where, *ex hypothesi*, the agent cannot perform both of the alternative actions and infers that it is not the case that the agent ought to perform both actions. But this conclusion is in conflict with another supposition: that if the agent ought to perform each action separately, then the agent ought to perform both actions together.

The second argument applies a closure principle to the effect that an agent ought not to do anything that prevents the agent from doing something which that agent ought to

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do. But this implies that an agent in a moral dilemma both ought and ought not adopt each alternative and this is in conflict with the supposition that we are morally permitted to do what we ought to do and hence that it is not the case that we ought not to do it.

The first argument can be presented more formally in the following fashion. We begin with the following two principles:

(A_1) $\quad \sim \Diamond A \rightarrow \sim OA$

(A_2) $\quad OA \ \& \ OB \rightarrow O(A\&B)$

(A_1) is just the contrapositive of the 'ought' implies 'can' principle: if an action is impossible for the agent to perform, that action is not obligatory for the agent. (A_2) is an agglomeration principle that tells us that if the agent ought to do one action and also ought to do a second action, then the agent ought to perform both of those two actions.

The thesis that there are moral dilemmas implies that the following three propositions can all be simultaneously true:

(1) $\quad OA$
(2) $\quad OB$
(3) $\quad \sim \Diamond(A \ \& \ B)$

But conjoining (1)–(3) with (A_1) and (A_2) enables us to derive a contradiction thus:

(4) $\quad O(A \ \& \ B)$ $\qquad\qquad$ from (1), (2), (A_2)
(5) $\quad \sim O(A \ \& \ B)$ $\qquad\qquad$ from (3), (A_1)
(6) $\quad O(A \ \& \ B) \ \& \ \sim O(A \ \& \ B)$ $\qquad\qquad$ from (4), (5).

The second argument for the impossibility of moral dilemmas introduces some further principles:

(A_3) $\quad (OA \ \& \ \sim \Diamond(A\&B)) \rightarrow O \sim B$

(A_4) $\quad OA \rightarrow PA$

(A_5) $\quad PA \leftrightarrow \sim O \sim A$

(A_3) is a closure principle which says that agents morally ought not to do anything that would prevent them from doing something that they morally ought to do. (A_4) tells us that if an action is obligatory then it is permissible. (A_5) says that 'permissible' is definable by 'not ought not'.

Conjoining propositions (1)–(3), i.e. the thesis that there are moral dilemmas, with these three new assumptions enables us to derive another contradiction thus:

(7) $\quad O \sim B$ $\qquad\qquad$ from (1), (3), (A_3)
(8) $\quad OB \ \& \ O \sim B$ $\qquad\qquad$ from (2), (7)
(9) $\quad OB \rightarrow \sim O \sim B$ $\qquad\qquad$ from (A_4), (A_5)
(10) $\quad \sim(OB \ \& \ O \sim B)$ $\qquad\qquad$ from (9)
(11) $\quad (OB \ \& \ O \sim B) \ \& \ \sim(OB \ \& \ O \sim B)$ $\qquad\qquad$ from (8), (10).

What these formalisations make clear, however, is that neither of the two arguments under consideration tries to show the thesis that there are moral dilemmas is, by itself, contradictory. Rather both arguments seek to show that the thesis is incompatible with certain, prima facie plausible, deontic principles. But this still leaves it open to the friends of moral dilemmas to deny those other principles instead. Thus with respect to

the first argument, defenders of moral dilemmas can just deny the agglomeration principle, or the 'ought' implies 'can' principle, or both.[20] With respect to the second argument, defenders of moral dilemmas can deny the closure principle, or that 'ought' implies 'permitted'.[21] To show conclusively that moral dilemmas are impossible we need to be more confident of the truth of the relevant deontic principles here than of the thesis that there are moral dilemmas. But it is by no means obvious that there is such a general confidence.

III

To argue thus for the inconclusiveness of these two arguments for the impossibility of moral dilemmas, however, does not do anything to demonstrate that there are such dilemmas. In a much discussed paper Bernard Williams has tried to argue from the existence of moral residues like regret (or remorse or guilt) to the existence of moral dilemmas.[22] Williams begins by pointing out that moral conflicts are more like conflicts of desire than conflicts of (non-moral) belief. When we act on one of two conflicting desires, the rejected desire is not always abandoned, for we may still regret what we have thereby missed. This contrasts with the case of (non-moral) belief, where we do not regret our abandoned false belief. Now when two moral *oughts* conflict and we act on only one of them, we may well still regret what was not done: i.e. we may hold on to the unactioned *ought* as a 'moral remainder', rather than totally reject it. Even if we are convinced that we acted for the best, we may still regret that we failed to honour one of our conflicting *oughts*. In other words, the phenomenon of regret shows it is mistaken to suppose that in situations of moral conflict it is always the case that 'one *ought* must be totally rejected in the sense that one becomes convinced that it did not actually apply'.[23] But this dubious supposition is essential to traditional scepticism about the possibility of moral dilemmas.

Obviously the argument requires some clarification of the nature of the regret appealed to here. After all, it may be that such regret, if it does exist, is just irrational or non-moral. First of all, we need to understand that Williams is alluding to a particular kind of regret: what some have called *agent regret*, where one morally regrets an action one has done.[24] Thus I may regret the Holocaust, but unless I believe that I was implicated in it as an agent, I cannot experience agent regret with respect to it. Secondly, it is not a condition of such regret that the agent would undo the action if she could. The agent may believe she acted for the best, but nevertheless still regret that course of action. Thirdly, agent regret is a species of moral regret: it is not just, for instance, regret at having to do something unpleasant (though agent regret will typically involve the agent experiencing some sort of unpleasant feeling). Finally, agent regret can be rational. What Williams is claiming, then, is that there are cases where an agent reasonably experiences agent regret with respect to an action, even though (through no fault of her own) she could not have done otherwise.

The argument from moral remainders to the existence of moral dilemmas needs to proceed with care. The only sort of moral remainder that would be direct evidence for moral dilemmas is an agent's *justified* (i.e. morally appropriate) feeling that she has violated a moral requirement. But her feeling can only be so justified if she has indeed violated one of two (or more) conflicting moral requirements — which is what the argument from regret is supposed to establish. In other words, the argument threatens to beg the question of whether there ever are conflicting moral requirements.

The most that the apparent existence of moral remainders can establish is that,

insofar as these emotions seem morally appropriate, then a putative explanation for them is that the agent has violated a moral requirement. Thus the inference runs not from the existence of regret to the existence of dilemma, but from dilemma to regret: if there are dilemmas, then regret is a morally appropriate response to their practical resolution. This inference does not by itself show that any particular case of regret is both morally appropriate and a response to a dilemma. But insofar as the particular regret seems morally appropriate, then one possible explanation for that appropriateness is that it may be a response to the violation of one of the moral requirements involved in a dilemma. The plausibility of this putative explanation in any particular case then has to be evaluated relative to competing explanations, as is usual when we search for an inference to the best explanation.

It is also important to be careful about how we characterise the emotions that are the moral remainders. I have already indicated that the relevant kind of regret is agent regret, not the kind of impersonal regret which implies no responsibility. Some writers prefer to use the term 'regret' in such a way that an agent's experiencing regret does not imply a belief that a moral requirement was violated.[25] Regret is then contrasted with remorse or guilt, both of which do imply such a belief. Other writers allow a sense of 'guilt' such that the experience of guilt need not imply a belief that one has committed any blameworthy offence. On this usage an agent can appropriately feel guilty provided merely that she is causally responsible for bringing about a terrible state of affairs: e.g. killing a child in a traffic accident, where there is no question of driver negligence.[26] Other putative examples of morally appropriate and blameless guilt are survivor guilt (or guilt over unjust enrichment), vicarious guilt for one's country's actions (where one had no effective power over those actions), and guilt for feelings and desires that one did not act upon.[27]

Given this diversity of usage, it seems unlikely that the concepts of guilt and related emotions are susceptible to precise analyses that entirely square with all the usages of ordinary language. Moreover it is important that scepticism about moral dilemmas does not turn upon a merely verbal point about which name we attach to the emotion that is the moral remainder. But perhaps all that we require for our present purposes are the following claims. First, that we need to acknowledge the existence of rectificatory responses of feeling rather than action – including emotions like guilt, remorse, regret and shame – and that these responses reveal relevant positive values of an agent who has acted wrongly or is identified with a bad action or state of affairs. Second, that such emotions often seem morally appropriate. Finally, that if there are moral dilemmas, then such emotions may well be a morally appropriate response to their practical resolution.

Why would such emotions be a morally appropriate response to a dilemma? One reason is that emotions like guilt are unpleasant to experience and this unpleasantness is likely to motivate us to avoid dilemmatic situations in the future.[28] But that is not the whole story. Consider in this regard a fictional case sometimes offered as a paradigmatic tragic dilemma: Agamemnon's choice to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia in order to save the becalmed Greek expedition and allow their passage to Troy to recover Helen. As that choice is represented in Aeschylus's *Agamemnon*, it is a choice to violate one moral requirement (a father's duties to his child) in order to fulfil another moral requirement (a leader's duties to protect the members of a morally justified military expedition). The tragedy of Agamemnon's situation is that either course of action involves him in guilt: clearly he ought not to slaughter his daughter and yet clearly he ought not to allow the members of the expedition (including Iphigenia) to starve to

death on a becalmed ship. For Aeschylus, however, what is most blameworthy about Agamemnon is not that he opted to sacrifice Iphigenia (an unwelcome choice which is nonetheless accepted as preferable to its alternative), but that he experiences no remorse about his actions.[29] The absence of any such emotion is taken to say something important about Agamemnon's moral character: his complacency because he takes himself to have obviously done the right thing, his failure to acknowledge the horror involved in (justifiably) sacrificing his own daughter, are quite properly condemned by the play's Chorus.

In other words, Aeschylus insists that there was a genuine moral dilemma involved in Agamemnon's choice: even if Agamemnon justifiably chose to fulfil only one of the conflicting moral claims, the force of the losing claim still has to be acknowledged and good character expresses this demand through pain and remorse. As Martha Nussbaum eloquently puts it:

> in the depiction of these cases Aeschylus has shown how thoroughly, in fact, the pain and remorse that are part of the intuitive picture are bound up with ethical goodness in other areas of life; with a seriousness about value, a constancy in commitment, and a sympathetic responsiveness that we wish to maintain and develop in others and ourselves.[30]

More generally, we need to acknowledge the moral importance of emotions like guilt as emotions of self-assessment. Gabriele Taylor argues, for example, that when a person feels guilt she is concerned with herself as the doer of a wrong deed. The repayment that is now due from her is required that she should be able to live with herself again.[31] The presence or absence of such emotions, their depth or shallowness, are indicators of the kind of person the agent is. Correspondingly the experience of an emotion of self-assessment changes the view the agent takes of herself.

Herbert Morris makes related points about the way in which a capacity to feel guilt is bound up with an agent's sense of empathy, with her sense of caring for others. A person who refuses to inflict upon herself the pain of guilt is a person who fails to acknowledge others' pain, a person with no sense of herself as someone who cares.[32] It is this feature that also helps explains the phenomena of justified 'non-moral guilt' (survivor guilt, vicarious guilt, or guilt for states of mind alone). Such cases involve one's (morally praiseworthy) sense of identification with others and hence while non-moral, derive from a moral posture towards others.[33]

IV

What is the relevance of all this to the practice of *mizuko kuyō*? Briefly, that the emotions involved in this Japanese practice are the very emotions of self-assessment that would be appropriate to the practical resolution of a moral dilemma. Moreover the participants themselves often speak of their practice in a way that is thoroughly consonant with the claim that they are responding to their previous actions in the face of a perceived moral dilemma.

For example: respondents to a 1987 survey of Japanese *mizuko kuyō* participants conducted by Elizabeth Harrison described their loss of a child as 'regrettable (*nasake-nai* and *kuyashii*), unavoidable (*yamu naku*), and the result of selfishness on their part (*watashi no mikatte*), all terms from ordinary language which they might have used about any unfortunate event in their lives for which they felt some responsibility'.[34] Many respondents expressed grief at the unavoidability of aborting a child, feeling that

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they were in a situation where there was no justifiable choice other than abortion. But very few of the respondents indicated that, given the chance to relive their decision to have an abortion, they would give birth to the child instead. Rather, they expressed regret that they had conceived a child in the first place, hoped never to repeat that irresponsibility, and thought it only right to do something for the absent child.[35]

In other words, the respondents' ritual apology to the aborted fetus is plausibly understood as an acknowledgement of the moral force of the losing claim in the practical resolution of a perceived dilemma. The guilt involved need not mean that the agent would now act differently if she had to choose again; only that she wishes to testify to her sense of the pain and remorse involved in the decision and thereby hold on to her sense of herself as a caring person, a person possessed of that prized sensitivity the Japanese call *kokoro*. As William LaFleur puts it:

> the majority of those who do mizuko kuyō may do so, at least in part, because they want to keep on believing that they are sensitive, conscience-controlled persons — even though in undergoing an abortion they have felt virtually compelled to do something that would seem to fly in the face of that self-assessment.[36]

For Japanese Buddhists, then, abortion is neither absolutely forbidden nor treated lightly. In this respect, the Japanese Buddhist response is a kind of 'middle way' between two extreme positions, both present in contemporary Japan.[37] One of these is the 'liberationist' camp which strongly supports legalised abortion and which opposes as victimising of women any practice that legitimises 'abortion guilt'. The other is the neo-Shinto camp which invokes a rhetoric that makes much of 'life', views abortion as an unmitigated evil and would like to recriminalise it. (The former position is obviously reminiscent of the western 'pro-choice' movement, the latter of the 'pro-life' movement.) The Buddhist position accepts that the fetus is 'life' in some morally significant sense (*pace* the liberationists). It also accepts that abortion is a locus of pain and suffering for both the fetus and its parents. Hence whereas neo-Shintoists refer to abortion as a sin (*tsumi*) or an evil (*aku*), Buddhists prefer to talk of the suffering (*ku*) or sadness (*kanashimi*) involved. Insofar as abortion necessarily harms another living being, regret and guilt are natural and morally appropriate emotions for a person who has chosen abortion to experience. But Buddhism also recognises the importance of showing compassion to women pregnant with unwanted fetuses, of the regrettable need at times to take life out of compassion for the woman bearing it. Thus the widespread Buddhist tolerance of abortion in Japan.

If abortion really is a genuine moral dilemma where an agent faces conflicting moral demands which cannot be simply resolved by one of the claims being justifiably overridden by another, then the Buddhist 'middle way' here is arguably a morally appropriate response to the situation. It gives full moral weight to the conflicting 'pro-life' and 'pro-choice' values, accepting the demands of both but acknowledging that any practical resolution of the dilemma will entail that one of the conflicting moral claims will perforce lose. However, the force of the losing claim still has to be acknowledged and good character expresses this demand through pain and remorse, publicly addressed in the *mizuko kuyō* ritual. I take this to be the sense in which Buddhism does indeed have something important to offer on the abortion issue: a response to 'the dilemma of abortion' that is a 'middle way' between the pro-choice and pro-life extremes that have polarised the Western debate.

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V

So far I have argued that if abortion is a moral dilemma, then we should expect that any action in the face of it will give rise to the existence of moral remainders, emotions like regret and guilt. Furthermore, Buddhists in modern Japan who have opted for abortion do indeed exhibit such emotions, emotions that the practice of *mizuko kuyō* deals directly with. A plausible interpretation of this phenomenon, then, is that these Buddhists are responding appropriately to abortion as a perceived moral dilemma. But is it correct to represent abortion as a genuine dilemma for Buddhists?

Damien Keown has vigorously defended a negative answer to this question. Keown rejects the suggestion that Buddhists can properly acknowledge a 'dilemma of abortion' representable as a conflict between two moral requirements: the requirement not to take life and the requirement to be compassionate. Insofar as Buddhism is unequivocally committed to the First Precept forbidding the taking of life and has also traditionally held that human life begins at conception, there can be no doubt that abortion is prohibited for Buddhists. Hence Keown claims that 'Buddhism may be regarded as holding what is known as a "consistent" (i.e. exceptionless) pro-life position'.[38]

Keown acknowledges that one way to challenge his position would be to concede that the First Precept prohibits killing, but to argue that killing in certain circumstances may be justifiable because compassion requires it. He speculates that 'the likely direction this argument would take would be to suggest that the rule against taking human life is of a *prima facie* nature and can be overridden when circumstances require', perhaps invoking the Buddhist notion of *upāya-kauśalya* or 'skilful means'.[39] However, such an argument, he suggests, has yet to be made at any length.

Although I think it would be very interesting to see such an argument developed at some length, it is not the argument I am defending here. To invoke the notion of *prima facie* duties in order to defend the permissibility of abortion is to give up the claim that there is a genuine dilemma of abortion. Instead any apparent conflict of two moral obligations would be dissolved into a situation where only one of those obligations is actual. The other obligation would then be merely prima facie (i.e. certainly overrideable, and perhaps not even a real moral obligation at all). A moral dilemma, in contrast, involves conflicting moral obligations which cannot be resolved by one of the requirements being justifiably overridden by another.

Can abortion be plausibly represented as such a dilemma for Buddhists? To answer this question we need to be clearer about the status of the apparently conflicting principles involved, i.e. the First Precept and the demands of compassion.

The First Precept is uncontroversially fundamental to traditional Buddhist ethics since taking the Three Refuges and the Five Precepts has traditionally been seen as the mark of becoming a Buddhist. The Five Precepts are incumbent on all Buddhists, both lay and monastic. In its Pali version, the First Precept says, 'I undertake the rule of training to refrain from taking life (*pāṇātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi*)'. Like the other precepts, the First Precept is thus a rule of training, a personal commitment rather than a commandment. As such it creates for those who endorse it a genuine moral requirement, but the requirement does not have the kind of 'moral necessity' that some have thought to be characteristic of moral prescriptions.

When Kant claimed that 'obligation includes *necessitation*' he meant to imply that moral prescriptions *must* be obeyed no matter what.[40] Unsurprisingly, then, he also went on to endorse the 'ought' implies 'can' principle and declare a conflict of obligations impossible. Buddhists are not committed to anything as uncompromising as

this. While it is true that if an agent takes the First Precept she ought to refrain from taking life, it does not follow that this *ought* cannot conflict with another *ought*. But then when an agent acts on only one of these *oughts* because acting on both is impossible, the other *ought* persists as a moral remainder, with resultant agent regret and a felt need to compensate.

The conflicting *ought* here is supposed to be the obligation of Buddhists to show compassion. However, while it is true that compassion (*karuṇā*) is explicitly recognised as a virtue in Buddhism (particularly in the Mahāyāna), it certainly does not feature among the Five Precepts. This suggests an obvious objection to the claim that abortion can be represented as a dilemma for Buddhists involving a conflict between the moral requirement to refrain from taking life and the requirement to be compassionate: there is no moral requirement on Buddhists to be compassionate in the way that there is a fundamental moral requirement to keep the First Precept. Hence if the two demands come into collision, the First Precept presumably overrides the other.

To respond to this objection we need to make a distinction between moral *require-ments* and moral *ideals*.[41] Moral requirements are those moral reasons (including obligations, duties and rights) for adopting an alternative such that it would be morally wrong of us not to adopt that alternative, unless there is moral justification for not doing so. For instance: a moral reason not to kill is plausibly a requirement because killing is morally wrong, unless there is an adequate justification for doing so. Another way to put the matter is to say that someone who fails to adopt a moral requirement without justification is thereby liable to punishment (i.e. it would not be morally wrong to punish him). Typically, moral requirements are those moral reasons associated with the moral rules.

But although the moral rules are an essential part of morality, they are not the whole of it, for morality includes moral ideals as well as rules. Moral ideals are those moral reasons for adopting an alternative such that, although it would be morally good or ideal to do so, it need not be morally wrong to refrain (even when there is no moral justification for so refraining). Thus it might be morally ideal to exhibit compassion without it being the case that it is morally wrong not to do so on every occasion (even if there is no moral justification on those occasions for failing to exhibit compassion). A person who acted so would not thereby be liable to punishment.

With this distinction between requirements and ideals in hand we can distinguish three kinds of moral conflict: (i) between ideals and ideals, (ii) between requirements and requirements, and (iii) between ideals and requirements. Conflicts between ideals are surely possible, but not usually what people have in mind when they dispute the possibility of moral dilemmas. Instead the paradigm example of a moral dilemma is typically taken to be a conflict between two moral requirements. This point now enables us to sharpen the objection against representing abortion as a dilemma involving the incompatible requirements of harmlessness and compassion: although there is a moral requirement in Buddhism to refrain from taking life, there is no requirement to be compassionate (it would be morally wrong, for instance, to punish a person for failing to be compassionate). Hence insofar as dilemmas are conflicts of requirements, abortion cannot be a moral dilemma for Buddhists.

I reply to this objection by invoking the third kind of possible moral conflict distinguished above: that between an ideal and a requirement. For instance, I might promise to do something (thus creating a moral requirement) and then be asked to assist with some worthy activity that would promote a moral ideal. If it would be impossible for me to fulfil the demands of both the requirement and the ideal on this

occasion, then we have a situation which would often also be counted as a moral dilemma. Certainly the structure of the situation is much the same as that of the standard moral dilemma involving a conflict of requirements. Moreover it is surely as plausible to suppose that such ideal–requirement conflicts are sometimes irresolvable (in the sense that neither demand is overridden in any morally relevant way) as it is to suppose that requirement–requirement conflicts are sometimes irresolvable.

Unsurprisingly Buddhist ethics exhibits the presence of both requirements and ideals. The basic moral rules enshrined in the Five Precepts are moral requirements in our sense: in the absence of justification, it is wrong for a Buddhist to kill, steal, indulge in illicit sex, lie or take intoxicants. But these rules do not capture all of Buddhist ethics: there are also the Buddhist ideals, one of which is compassion. Moreover, Buddhism insists that its supreme value, the state of *nirvāṇa*, is not to be attained merely by following the rather minimal demands of the moral rules.[42] Abortion, then, could indeed be a genuine moral dilemma for Buddhists: an irresolvable conflict between the demands of the moral requirement of the First Precept and the moral ideal of compassion. If it is such a dilemma, then whichever option we choose we violate one sort of moral claim, leaving us with a moral remainder that has to be acknowledged. The *mizuko kuyō* ritual allows those who have opted for abortion to acknowledge their sense of the moral weight of the losing value of harmlessness.

Of course, this does not mean that Buddhists are thereby committed to holding that every decision to abort is the reasoned practical resolution of a genuine moral dilemma; nor do the emotions of regret and guilt experienced by the *mizuko kuyō* participants entail that they are responding to the practical resolution of an *actual*, rather than an *apparent*, dilemma. But insofar as those involved in an abortion choice have reasonably taken themselves to have been involved in a situation with the structure of a dilemma, their subsequently opting for *mizuko kuyō* while continuing to insist that they would not undo what they have done is entirely morally appropriate. Faced with such a perceived dilemma, the *mizuko kuyō* ritual provides for a Buddhist 'middle way' with respect to abortion, a way that gives full moral weight to the irresolvably conflicting demands of both pro-choice and pro-life values.

One final point. Some Japanese feminists have been highly critical of *mizuko kuyō* and the significance of the suffering it highlights.[43] They argue that the high rate of abortion in Japan and the attendant guilt women often feel about opting for abortion are a direct result of masculine resistance to making contraception and sex education freely available to women. But Buddhists should surely accept this too. If abortion is ever a genuine moral dilemma, then it is obvious that it would be morally preferable to avoid being put in such a position, since whichever way the agent acts she violates some sort of moral claim. Moreover, although Buddhism has traditionally disapproved of abortion, there is no such traditional disapproval of contraception.[44] Hence, Buddhists should freely grant that it is important to promote sex education and birth control in order to minimise the prospects of women being placed in an abortion dilemma, as unfortunately has not been done in Japan. However, this is entirely compatible with it also being true that if women do find themselves in such a dilemma, then *mizuko kuyō* represents a morally appropriate Buddhist response.

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[16] Florida, op. cit., note 4, pp. 25–26.

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[33] MORRIS, op.cit., note 27.

[34] HARRISON (1998), op. cit., note 13, p. 105.

[35] Ibid., p. 107.

[36] LAFLEUR (1992), op. cit., note 11, p. 155.

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[39] Ibid.

[40] KANT, IMMANUEL (1987) Moral duties, in: GOWANS, op. cit., note 19, p. 38.

[41] SINNOTT-ARMSTRONG, op. cit., note 19, pp. 11–15; GERT, BERNARD (1988) *Morality: a new justification of the moral rules* (New York, Oxford University Press).

[42] 'Or to put it in Buddhist terms: *merely moral practices will never bring a man to sainthood or Nibbana*' (KING, WINSTON L. (1964) *In the Hope of Nibbana: an essay on Theravada Buddhist ethics* (LaSalle, Open Court), p. 31.)

[43] See, for instance, IGETA, MIDORI (1995) A response, *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 11, pp. 95–100.

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Book Reviews

Elaborations on Emptiness. Uses of the Heart Sūtra
DONALD S. LOPEZ, JR, 1996
Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press
xii + 266 pp., pb, ISBN 0 691 00188 X

The author acknowledges that so far the fullest study of the Sanskrit text of this short but exceedingly popular *sūtra* was produced by Edward Conze (in his *Thirty Years of Buddhist Studies*, 1969, pp. 148–167), but he has based his own study on its Tibetan version and presents his translation of the *sūtra* from Tibetan at the beginning of the book. This makes sense because the elaborations on the *sūtra*'s teaching on emptiness with which he deals are contained in eight commentaries, all of them extant in Tibetan, the Sanskrit originals having been lost. Besides, one of the commentators, Vimalamitra, participated in the translating of the *Heart Sūtra* into Tibetan.

The popularity of this *sūtra* may be explained partly by its brevity, which makes its daily recitation in the temples of practically all Mahāyāna schools in Asian countries attractive and easy. There is some evidence that it was already being recited during regular *pūjās* in India, at least during the Pāla period (730–1197 AD). The date of the *Heart Sūtra* is still disputed and placed variously from the second to the 4th century AD. There is even a view that it is a Chinese 'apocryphal' text translated into Sanskrit in the seventh century.

The *sūtra*'s message closes with a *mantra* which is given in its Sanskrit form in all other language versions and has been all along and still is the most widely recited Buddhist *mantra* ever: (*oṁ*) *gate gate pāragate pārasaṅgate bodhi svāhā*. The Buddhist *mantra* proper consists of only five words. The initial ancient (Vedic) mantric syllable *oṁ* does not appear in all manuscripts and is not always intoned, but the *mantra* always finishes with the almost equally ancient *svāhā*, which is also of Vedic origin and has its use in ritual as a 'presentation' word during oblations to gods and at the end of many mantric formulas. In Buddhist contexts these two words may just stand for what we nowadays indicate by putting a phrase into inverted commas. The author says that '*oṁ* seems to mark the threshold of some sacred verbal space, while *svāhā* marks its closure'. The *mantra* may or may not be translatable, but many attempts have been undertaken to make sense of it, since its constituent words are not as cryptic as in most other mantric formulas. If *gate* were regarded as a locative absolute, as the author himself suggests, one could translate it thus: '(Having) gone, (having) gone, (having) gone beyond, (having) completely gone beyond, (there is) enlightenment'. This is, in my experience, how it is mostly understood in the circles of western adherents of Tibetan type Buddhist teachings and practices. It is felt to be a powerful invocation during a *pūjā*. Kamalaśīla and some other commentators regard the five words of the *mantra* as encoded messages representing five progressive paths of achievement. It came to be used also for exorcism and in esoteric practice it was believed to convey to the initiate the entire path of liberation in all its fullness after one single recitation. Needless to say it is also viewed as a magic formula whose repetition will bring worldly benefits and merits for future lives.

The main reason why the *Heart Sūtra* is held in such high regard, however, is probably the apparent profundity and mystery of its contents which, it is said, can be fully understood only by *buddhas* and enlightened *bodhisattvas*. It cannot be explained, but can be meditated upon in order to develop insight. However, the fact that for centuries it has been ritually recited in full also caused it to be regarded and treated as a big *mantra* with great power behind it. It is still believed to dispel obstacles, for example in the minds of participants in a religious discourse or even in political negotiations. The author says that it is often used thus in the Tibetan tradition. I have witnessed the recitation of the whole *Heart Sūtra* at the beginning of some meditation classes even in the Buddhist Society in London. The author further relates that prior to his address before the European Parliament in Strasbourg in 1988, the Dalai Lama instructed the monks of Tibetan monasteries in India to recite the *Heart Sūtra* several million times. He was putting before the Parliament some proposals for resolving the painful situation of Tibet. It does not seem to have worked.

But what actually does the *Heart Sūtra* teach? Its ritual, magical and mystical uses apart, can one make some sense of it in conceptual terms? It of course teaches emptiness and it does so in the first place in relation to the five 'aggregates' or constituents of personality of which the early Buddhist sources say that they are substanceless (*anatta/anātman*), i.e. without an abiding and permanent *substratum*. To say that they are empty would appear to amount to the same. However, here the first problem arises in connection with the precise formulation of the original *Heart Sūtra*. For the purpose of analysis it suffices to consider the statement about the first named constituent, namely 'form' (*rūpa*), bearing in mind that the same goes also for the remaining four. I have always heard it quoted as 'form is emptiness, emptiness verily is form' (*rūpaṁ śūnyatā śūnyataiva rūpaṁ*). In some Sanskrit editions there occurs also the wording 'form is empty' (*rūpaṁ śūnya*), and all preserved Tibetan translations and commentaries read it this way. Consulted by the author, the Dalai Lama told him that there was 'no significant difference in meaning'. What, then, is the insignificant difference in meaning between these two versions?

Perhaps one can argue that if form is emptiness, then – form being a real thing in its own context, that is in the context of the world of phenomena – emptiness must also be real in its own context, and since it applies to *all* phenomena, its context is universal or absolute. This might be regarded as a source for its hypostatisation, and therefore for the introduction of *ātman* under another name. If, on the other hand, form is *empty*, i.e. without any *substratum* inside it, then we have here only a negative descriptive adjective and emptiness is merely its abstract derivative noun. As such it does not lend itself to being viewed as a metaphysical entity. 'Emptiness is form' may then be understood, following the commentary by Prasāstrasena, as 'indicating that emptiness is not to be found apart from form', i.e. apart from the phenomenal world. It is not a positive concept and does not designate anything real on either the phenomenal or the absolute level. Then the *bodhisattvas*, who have realised, not just conceptually, but by direct experience, that the whole phenomenal cosmos, i.e. *saṁsāra*, is empty, can cruise, while they 'rely on and abide in the perfection of wisdom', across its innumerable world systems, helping beings for whom their 'empty' suffering is still all too real. If this little comment has any validity, would the difference be really so insignificant?

The author says that it is difficult 'to speculate, much less determine, what it was about the *Heart Sūtra* that warranted so many commentaries' in the past in 'a relatively limited period of time'. Nor is it easy 'to say precisely what it is about the text that elicited such interest, a text that strikes us today, even in its brevity, as a redundant

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litany of negations'. Yet he himself has written two books about it and he certainly is not a lone scholar in this respect. So perhaps I may be forgiven for the above mini-commentary of my own; it is difficult also for me to speculate, much less determine, why I did it. I will therefore now abstain from further speculation and proceed to give a brief characteristic of the present author's commentary on the *Heart Sūtra* and of his subcommentaries to its eight commentaries.

The *sūtra* begins with the notorious phrase *evaṁ mayā śrutam*, which the author renders 'Thus did I hear', and so in his first essay he asks who it was who heard it. The *sūtra* itself does not give a clue. Each one of the answers which have been pondered, e.g. Vajrapāṇi, Mañjuśrī, Samantabhadra, or even Ānanda, the traditionally named reciter of the historical Buddha's discourses, has its particular implications, not least the *sūtra*'s silence about the matter. It boils down to the question of authenticity to which the author dedicates much space. The silence, in fact, enabled anybody to claim 'hearing' a discourse directly from the transcendental source, the cosmic Buddha or *dharmakāya*, in meditational absorption. The proliferation of texts in the centuries of the rise of Mahāyāna suggests that this was the prevalent position. A new *sūtra* thus obtained and *written down*, since others could not hear it as during the Buddha's presence on earth, became a visible embodiment of the teaching and also a substitute for the historical Buddha as an object of worship which was even in his lifetime the prevailing feature of the new movement; after all, his teaching was for only a few – those with only a little dust on their eyes, so that they could see the truth. After the Buddha's death worship was directed to his relics. Stūpas enshrining them became centres of attraction and since Aśoka's time splinters of relics were further distributed and stūpas grew in number. But popular Buddhism needed ever more centres for worship, more than there were relics. Thus a view was developed that the new wisdom *sūtras* as substitutes for the Buddha's presence could be equally well enshrined in stūpas in place of relics. This, the author suggests, was one reason for writing new *sūtras*, even though not the only one.

The author alternates his essays with four chapters, each containing his translation of two commentaries, the first two being those of Vimalamitra and Atīśa. The former arrived in Tibet some time before 800 AD and stayed for 13 years. Besides his sober commentary, advocating the meticulous practice of the elaborate *bodhisattva* path even though it is empty, the Tibetan tradition ascribes to him several extant Tantric works. Atīśa came in 1042 AD, reformed monastic practices and stayed till his death 12 years later. Commenting on the mental process of 'viewing' or insight, he explains it in terms of four levels of increasingly non-conceptual vision. In the following essay the author addresses the problem of the use of the *Heart Sūtra* in the context of Tantrism, whereupon follows the translation of commentaries by Kamalaśīla (740–795 AD), the victor in the 'great debate' in Lhasa and his mysterious contemporary Śrīsiṁha, a renowned Tantric. If the *Heart Sūtra* is viewed also as a Tantric text, it must contain a practical path, a *sādhana*. The author tackles this question in his next essay which is followed by the translation of commentaries by Jñānamitra, dated some time during the Pāla dynasty, and Praśāstrasena, already referred to above, of whom nothing is known. The subsequent essay puts the *Heart Sūtra*'s great *mantra*, which I discussed earlier, into a wider context by ventilating the problem of what a *mantra* might actually be. The author takes account of a number of views, from Malinowski to Derrida as well as of stories with fantastic claims, but I failed in the attempt to formulate, for myself, an outcome of it all, let alone for offering a succinct characterisation to the reader. The final pair of commentaries in translation is, respectively, by Śrīmahāyāna, a Yogācāra thinker who may have been in Tibet around 1100 AD, and Vajrapāṇi, a Tantric master

in the 12th century. The author then devotes a large part of his final essay to the description of what has become the most common application of the *Heart Sūtra* in Tibet, namely in exorcism. Rituals based on various versions of a manual called 'Repelling Demons with the Heart Sūtra' (*Sher-snying-bdud-zlog*) are used by all major sects. The rest of the essay ponders wider problems of Buddhism, religion and magic, also in relation to Bön. Commendable is that the author draws attention in it to the early branding of Tibetan Buddhism as 'Lamaism' by Catholic missionaries, following the term used for it at the Manchu court, *lama jiao*, the sect of the lamas. The term was then widely adopted in Europe, in the wake of the still used and well known work by Waddell (*The Buddhism of Tibet or Lamaism*, 1895) in which he claimed that 'Lamaism is only thinly and imperfectly varnished over with Buddhist symbolism, beneath which the sinister growth of poly demonist superstition darkly appears'. Nor is, of course, the claim of some Tibetan Buddhists justified that all their practices have been derived from Indian masters. The book finishes with what could be regarded as an extensive postscript. It is called 'Commentators Ancient and Postmodern'. I myself do not quite understand the term 'postmodern' in any of its uses, but the author's critical survey is both useful and interesting. It is also relevant to comparative philosophy and the study of religions in general.

I cannot imagine that anybody concerned with the study of Tibetan Buddhism and, indeed, Mahāyāna Buddhism, and particularly the teaching on emptiness could from now on do without utilising this book. It is a product of first class scholarship and shows the author's wide and deep knowledge of his sources and the related literature on various levels and across scholarly disciplines. At the same time it is written in a lucid style easily understood. Not only does one learn a lot from it, but even just reading it is a real pleasure.

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Jīvanmukti in Transformation. Embodied Liberation in Advaita and Neo-Vedanta •
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While Buddhist and Jain traditions have always maintained that liberation while living was not only possible, but, indeed, the desired goal of spiritual endeavour, some schools of Hindu thought have questioned its feasibility: even saints of the highest calibre could not be regarded as fully liberated as long as they lived an 'embodied' life in the material world. In the 'unorthodox' systems the matter has been seen as very simple: the teacher – the Buddha or Jina – was free from the round of rebirths and from all defilements and bonds. His only concern in continued living was to show others the way to liberation, which was not a materially or karmically binding activity so that it would not in any way impinge on his liberated status. His motivation for teaching was, as expressed with particular emphasis in Buddhist texts about the Buddha, compassion for the suffering of other beings. The accomplished disciples – *arahats* – in both these traditions were also liberated from any further rebirth, but they had not taken upon themselves the task of fulfilling a universal mission, like the Buddha as the 'teacher of gods and men' or Jina

The Notion of Merit in Indian Religions

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ABSTRACT   *There are uses of the term merit in Indian religions which also appear in secular contexts, but in addition there are other uses that are not encountered outside religion. Transfer of merit is a specific doctrine in whose connection the term merit is used with an intention which is not the same as that found in nonreligious contexts. Two main types of transfer of merit can be distinguished. First, the transfer of merit has been associated with certain ritual practices in Hinduism and in Buddhism. Another main type of transfer of merit is connected with Mahāyāna belief in bodhisattvas' loving-kindness towards other beings. In the orthodox Hindu schools, in Hīnayāna Buddhism and in Jainism, transfer of merit has been rejected on account of the doctrine of karma according to which the person can acquire karmic outcomes for only those actions he or she has performed by himself.*

1. Introduction

Recently, Indologists, scholars in comparative religion and philosophers of religion have actively discussed the classical Indian doctrines of karma and rebirth.[1] In this connection, many philosophers have paid attention to the concept of merit in these doctrines from the moral or juridical point of view. In this essay, I examine how the notion of merit in Indian religions is related to the common, nonreligious notion of merit. Especially I will discuss some philosophical questions associated with the Hindu and Buddhist idea of transfer of merit.

2. The Common Nonreligious Notion of Merit

Detailing the conceptual content of merit in Indian religions becomes easier when the uses of the term merit (or its equivalents in other natural languages) in Indian religions are considered in light of its uses in secular contexts. The advantage of beginning with the secular uses of the term is that they are less likely than the religious uses to immediately provoke some deep-rooted disagreements.[2] Here I shall propose a definition of merit which is based on how the term is used in secular contexts.

The term merit is commonly used when someone regards a person as the doer of a good deed and gives him or her the credit for that deed. (I speak here of deeds, or actions, for the sake of simplicity, although I include here not only deeds of commission but also deeds of omission.) To give one credit for one's deed is to provide a positive sanction, for example, by expressing appreciation in words or by giving a reward. In addition to receiving merit for deeds, one can also be meritorious due to one's qualities, abilities, or capacities; for instance, for one's appearance, strength, or intelligence. In competitions involving each of these qualities, one can be rewarded for them. The examples given here show that merit, in the proper sense of the word, is not merely a deed or quality alone, but includes also the judgement that a person deserves honour

or reward for it. Such judgements have their basis in a social system which uses sanctions for enforcing and reinforcing social discipline and conformity.[3] Usually one can receive merit only for those actions that are in accordance with social standards. Hence, merit is *a deed or quality regarded as the basis for receipt of appreciation or reward in a social system.*[4]

This definition of merit entails two things. First, it entails that if no action is performed or if there is no quality, then there is no merit. Secondly, it also entails that if no system of sanctions exists, then no merit exists. Thus, merit is a threefold relation between a deed or quality, the doer of the deed or the possessor of a quality, and a system of sanctions. Sanctions – appreciation and reward, or blame and punishment – are distributed based on value judgements about deeds or qualities. With regard to the distribution of sanctions, I have attempted to conceptualise merit by the idea of *the basis for receipt*. As the basis for receipt, the relation of merit to a reward is analogical to the relation of a coupon to a product or service which people can get upon presentation of the coupon: just as the coupon presupposes a product or service but is not itself that product or service, similarly merit presupposes a reward, but merit itself is not that reward.

I have assumed that the notion of merit entails the notions of appreciation and reward. In common secular practices, appreciation or reward is given only to the doer of a good deed or possessor of a good quality, and neither appreciation nor reward can be transferred from one person to another. In view of this, the logic of merit includes the assumption that merits are personal in the sense that the appreciation or reward for a deed or quality should go only to the person who did that deed or has that quality. The same applies also to *fault or demerit as the basis for blame or punishment*: neither blame nor punishment is transferable because one is blamed or punished precisely as the person who did the deed or has the quality.[5] This entails that a person must have merit before receiving reward, or demerit before receiving punishment.[6] Furthermore, it follows that the concept of agent or the concept of the doer of deed is central in regard to the distribution of rewards and punishments.

Although transferability is not included – in fact, it is precluded – in the logic of reward or punishment, that which is given as reward or punishment can sometimes be transferred from one person to another. When the thing originally given as reward or punishment for one person is transferred to another person, it is not, however, given with the intention of rewarding or punishing the latter person, at least not for the original deed or quality.[7] In general, then, that which is given as a positive sanction is commonly transferable. Correspondingly, that which is given as negative sanction is commonly nontransferable, because the intention behind negative sanctions is to cause a person to suffer for his or her offence.[8] For example, imprisonment and execution are nontransferable, negative sanctions. A fine, in turn, is an example of a transferable negative sanction. In general, when a sanction is pecuniary in nature, that which is given as a sanction can be transferred quite easily from one person to another.

Besides personality, another important aspect of the logic of merit is that to have merit due to an action commonly presupposes intentionality. The presupposition of intentionality can be seen, for example, in the fact that intentional actions are usually considered more meritorious than actions which are good but performed unintentionally.[9] One thing entailed by the presupposition of intentionality is that not only an individual, but also a group or an institution can be meritorious provided that it acts intentionally. So, for example, a football team, a construction crew or an army can be meritorious if it has acted purposefully to gain an end. Yet the meritoriousness of a group does not presuppose intentionality

alone, but also that a group intention is irreducible to the intentions of the individual members of that group.

Let me succinctly summarise the main points of the analysis. I have stated that in secular contexts appreciation or reward is given only to the doer of a good deed or to the possessor of a good quality, and neither appreciation nor reward can be transferred from one person to another. In view of this, the logic of merit includes the assumption that merits are personal. However, it does not follow necessarily from the nontransferability of merit that what is received due to merit is nontransferable. Nevertheless, sometimes even that which is received due to merit or demerit is incapable of being transferred. As far as actions are considered, having merit assumes intentionality: persons or groups of persons are held to be meritorious by the performance of international actions.

So far I have considered the notion of merit without distinguishing between moral and nonmoral merit. This distinction is especially relevant to that part of the proposed definition of merit according to which merit is associated with a social system of sanctioning. Moral merit is a deed or quality in relation to a system of moral praise. Nonmoral merit, in turn, is a deed or quality in relation to systems having in common the feature that the positive sanction, appreciation or reward is not based on the moral goodness of deeds or qualities, but on some other quality; for instance, on the aesthetic, economic or technical goodness of deeds or qualities. However, the same deed or quality can have both moral merit and nonmoral merit. This is one reason why the distinction between the moral sense and nonmoral sense of merit is not always apparent. Another reason why the distinction between moral and nonmoral merit or demerit is not always apparent is that rewarding and punishing are practices that can be applied not only with the intention of moral praise or blame, but also with the intention of nonmoral praise and blame.

Even though the use of merit terminology is related to the deed or qualities of persons in the first place, impersonal or unintentional things are also sometimes said to have merit; for example, a horse, a novel, or an idea can have merit. When a horse, a novel, or in idea is said to have merit, what is often meant, however, is that the breeder of the horse, the writer of the novel, or the person who has introduced the idea is meritorious. In such cases, a person acquires an appreciation or reward through an impersonal thing. A novelist, for example, can be rewarded for his work in that the novel written by him is rewarded. When a book wins the first prize, what is usually meant, however, is that the writer of the book wins the first prize. Nevertheless, an impersonal thing may have merit also independently of its owner or author. When an impersonal thing, for example, an animal, plant, or another natural object, is said to have merit or demerit independently of any person, it is held in high or low esteem. Yet it is not associated with the basis for receipt of a reward or punishment.[10] Thus, when a natural object is said to have merit, the merit terminology is applied to a domain to which it is not completely applicable.

3. Merit in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism

Above, I have considered some common nonreligious uses of the term merit. On the basis of these considerations, a provisional definition of merit was proposed: merit is a deed or quality regarded as the basis for receipt of appreciation or reward in a social system. Next I shall scrutinise the notion of merit in Indian religions. I shall do this by attending to those uses of the language of merit in Indian religions which seem uncommon or problematic in the light of the common secular uses of such terminology.

To begin with, there are uses for the term merit (S. *dharma, punya*; P. *puñña, patti*) in Indian religions which also appear in secular contexts, but in addition there are other uses that do not appear in secular contexts. Special religious merit results from, for example, feeding monks, the performance of a ritual, going on a pilgrimage, building temples, worship of deities, study of the scriptures, and rigorious disciplines.[11] Rewards for such deeds and practices can be, for instance, a blessing given by a priest or the right to participate in a religious ceremony. The reward can also be of a supernatural sort, for example, help given by a god, which is expected to bring about, for instance, a good harvest or recovery from an illness, or a good karmic consequence, especially a fortunate rebirth. These examples show that even though certain acts and, especially, certain rewards which are not encountered outside religion appear in religion, the formal criteria for determining what merit is are the same in religion and outside it in many cases. According to those criteria, in order for something to be a merit, it must be a good deed or quality. Thus, the intension of the term merit is often the same whether that term is used in a religious or in a secular context, even if the extensions or instances of merit differ.

The following example will disclose some ideas which have contributed to the notion of merit in classical Indian thinking. Kaṇāda, the first person to systematise Vaiśeṣika philosophy, proposes a definition of merit in his second *Vaiśeṣika Aphorism (Vaiśeṣikasūtra)*.[12] According to Kaṇāda, 'merit (*dharma*) is that from which results attainment of elevation and of the highest good'.[13] In the fourth aphorism he says that 'the highest good results from knowledge of the truth which springs from particular merit'.[14] Jaya-Nārāyaṇa Tarkapanchānana, a commentator on the *Vaiśeṣika Aphorisms*, has attempted to explain the idea of particular merit mentioned by Kaṇāda. According to Tarkapanchānana, 'particular merit is particular good works done either in this life or in a former state of existence'.[15] The accounts of merit presented by Kaṇāda and Tarkapanchānana are related to certain well-known ideas in Indian philosophy and religion, especially to the doctrines of karma, rebirth, and *mokṣa*. In view of this, Kaṇāda's and Tarkapanchānana's definitions of merit clearly show that the conceptions of merit found in Indian religions and in secular contexts differ from each other.

Transfer of merit (S. *pariṇāmanā, puṇyānumodanā*; P. *patti, pattidāna, parivaṭṭa, puññānumodanā,* or *pattānumodanā*)[16] is a specific doctrine in whose connection the term merit is used with an intention which is not the same as that found in nonreligious contexts. As I have mentioned, the common nonreligious uses of the term merit exclude the transferability of merit. The idea of transfer of merit is regarded as problematic in most Indian traditions too. Transfer of merit does appear in the teachings and practices of unorthodox Hindu schools and Mahāyāna Buddhism, but is rejected in orthodox Hindu schools, in Hīnayāna Buddhism and even more clearly in Jainism.

The idea of transfer of merit is absent from all of the six major schools of Indian philosophy of the Sūtra period:[17] Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā, and Vedānta. These schools regard the Vedas as infallible and authoritative, due to which they are called the Vaidika systems, the orthodox schools (*āstika-mata*), or 'vision of orthodoxy' (*āstikadarśana*). It has been held by the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika schools that merit (*dharma*) and demerit (*adharma*) are qualities (*guṇa*) of the self just as pleasure (*sukha*), pain (*duḥkha*), desire (*icchā*), and aversion (*dveṣa*) are.[18] One's own pleasure or pain is not transferable and the same holds of one's own merit or demerit. For example, Udayana (1050 AD) emphasises in his *Nyāyakusumāñjali* that merit and demerit (apūrva, 'unseen' results of actions) are in the self of the subject and not just properties of the objects experienced. If it were not so, then one would have to suffer from the

consequences of an action not done and from not being able to enjoy the consequences of one's own actions.[19] To the Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā, and Vedānta thinkers also, merit and demerit are characteristics of a person's 'internal organ' (*antaḥ-karaṇa*) which consists of the intellect (*buddhi*), the mind (*manas*), and the ego (*ahaṅkāra*).[20]

According to the Advaita (Vedānta) philosopher Śaṅkara (700–800), man must earn his own salvation and cannot give his karma away to someone else, not even to God.[21] The *Mahābhārata* also states that

> whatever deed a man does in four ways, viz. with eye, with thought, speech or action, he receives (in return) that same kind of action; a man does not enjoy (i.e. experience the results of) the good deed or evil deeds of another; man attains (a result) in consonance with the actions done by himself.[22]

In classical Indian literature, the idea of transfer of merit appears especially in the *Purāṇas*. However, the *Purāṇas* do not agree on the possibility of transfer of merit either.[23]

In classical Buddhist texts, especially of the Hīnayāna/Theravāda tradition,[24] merits are considered as personal and nontransferable. For example, the *Saṁyattanikāya* (the third collection of the *Suttapiṭaka* of the *Tripiṭaka*, P. *Tipiṭaka*, the Pali canon of Theravāda Buddhism) emphasises the personality of karma, advising each being to be an island unto himself, working out his own salvation.[25] The *Saṁyattanikāya* states also that one reaps what one sows; thus the doer of good receives good and the doer of evil receives evil.[26] According to the common view, transfer of merit is found in Mahāyāna Buddhism and it can be seen, for example, in that an important part of Mahāyāna practice, at the end of every ceremony, is the bestowing of whatever merit may have been attained to the benefit of other sentient beings.[27] Wolfgang Schumann says that the Mahāyāna teaching of the transfer of merit 'breaks the strict causality of the Hīnayānic law of *karman* (P. *kamma*) according to which everybody wanting better rebirth can reach it solely by his own efforts'. Yet, Schumann claims that on this point Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna differ only in the texts, for the religious practice in South East Asia acknowledges the transference of karmic merit (P. *pattidāna*) in Theravāda as well.[28]

Jainism rejects the transfer of merit outright.[29] For example, the tenth century Jaina teacher (*ācārya*) Amitagati forcefully claims in his *Nitya-naimittika-pāṭhāvalī* that

> except for karma earned for oneself by oneself, no one gives anything to anyone. Reflecting upon this fact, therefore, let every person, unwaveringly, abandon the perverse notion that another being can provide him with anything at all.[30]

Thus, some traditions of Indian origin are nearer to the common nonreligious view that merits are personal and nontransferable than others. In what follows, I provide material for the specification of the difference between the notion of merit in Indian religions and in common nonreligious contexts. This takes place through a closer consideration of the idea of transfer of merit.

4. The Historical and the Doctrinal Context of Transfer of Merit

So far I have stated that the idea of transfer of merit appears in unorthodox Hindu schools and in Buddhism, especially in its Mahāyāna tradition. However, in the light of the common, nonreligious notion of merit, the idea of transfer of merit seems strange.

The strangeness is due especially to the personal character of merit, related to the ideas that the person is to be praised or blamed for a morally good or bad action as its subject and that only the subject of the action must receive praise or blame for it.

In the light of the standard examples, transfer of merit has two principal rationales. On the one hand, transfer of merit is a way to contribute to one's good, for example, to gain health and a long life, or to gain a good rebirth, or to support the afterlife of one's dead relatives. Sometimes that which is contributed by transfer of merit is said to include also advancement in attaining *nirvāṇa*.[31] On the other hand, transfer of merit is a way to avoid an unhappy state in this life or in the next, particularly suffering due to bad karma, by compensating for or eliminating one's karmic demerits. The materialisation of bad karma, or, to express it metaphorically, the ripening of the karmic fruits (*vipāka-phala*) of bad actions is then supposed to be preventable by transfer of merit.

Classical Indian literature includes numerous accounts of situations in which transfer of merit is said to occur. In Vedic literature (1500–800 BC) the idea of transfer of merit was associated with the belief that merit ensues from the correct performance of ritual actions (karma). The merit acquired by the correct performance of rituals was thought to be transferred from the gods, through the priests who actually performed the ritual, to the person on whose behalf the sacrifice was made.[32] Thus, the person who was considered receiving the merit deserved for the performance of a sacrifice did not need to be the one who actually performed the ritual. In this respect, certain ritual practices modified the idea that one can acquire karmic outcomes for those actions only he has performed by himself.[33]

According to several scholars, the idea of transfer of merit appears initially in the context of the Brahminic funeral rites called *śrāddha*, through which an attempt was made to prevent the destruction of an afterlife or the suffering of 'repeated death' (*punarmṛtyu*) of the dead ancestors (*preta, pitṛ*) by providing ritual food for them. The descendants gave food also to the priests who helped them to perform the *śrāddha*. A share of the merit of the descendants, including the merit for having performed the *śrāddha*, was then thought to be transferred to their dead relatives.[34] Another practice of donating gifts, mostly food, for monks, thereby acquiring merits for one's dead parents or other relatives, was the lay Buddhist ritual *mataka dānē*.[35] The merit acquired by feeding priests or monks was often thought to be given also to gods in exchange for the protection given by them, for example, against illness, crop failure or evil spirits.[36] In the *prasāda* ritual of later Hinduism, a gift consecrated by the priest is assumed to be given to the god with the intention of transferring the worshipper's devotion to him or her, and then given back to the worshipper with merit added. By the enhancement of a gift in this way, the god's favour is believed to be transferred to the worshipper.[37]

In *śrāddha*, *mataka dānē*, and *prasāda* rituals, transfer of merit was mediated by an offering of food.[38] Another kind of ritual in which transfer of merit is associated, not with an offer of food but with making a promise, is the North Indian practice of a religious vow, *vrata* ('will' or 'what is willed'). By a *vrata*, a person is bound to an act or service in order to make amends for his or her past misdeeds or in order to transform his or her life path.[39] The reward of observing one's *vrata* is thought to be extended sometimes to other persons as well, usually to the vower's parents or children.[40] This extended rewarding, then, is called metaphorically transfer of merit.

Transfer of merit, for example, in the *śrāddha*, mataka dānē, prasāda, and *vrata* rituals, is related to a wider conceptual and doctrinal context concerning actions and their outcomes. In a philosophically explicated form this context is known as the

doctrine of karma. As I have noted, the idea of karma was originally connected with Vedic ritual practices in which good (*puṇya*) and bad (*pāpa*) referred to the valuation of action (*karma*) based on its ritual exactitude, good being equated with the correct performance of the rite and bad with the incorrect performance.[41] Yet karma did not remain merely a ritual notion, but gradually gained moral aspects, especially in the Upaniṣadic tradition.[42] According to the famous passage of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 'one becomes good by good action, bad by bad action'.[43] That verse, from about 600–500 BC, is taken to represent the very beginning of the doctrine of karma as a morally qualified doctrine.[44] According to the common view, it was Siddhārtha Gautama Buddha (*ca* 563–ca 483 BC),[45] however, who first completely ethicised the concept of karma.[46] In the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (the fourth collection of the *Suttapiṭaka* of the *Tripiṭaka*), the Buddha identifies karma with intention or volition (*cetanā*):

> I say, monks, that *cetanā* is *kamma*; having intended (*cetayitvā*), one does a deed by body, word, or thought.[47]

This particular statement of karma includes no hint of the idea that the actions performed in one life cause another life of a better or worse quality. However, the basic idea in the Buddhist doctrine of karma is that every intentional action has desirable or undesirable effects upon its agent in the future, based on the moral goodness or badness of the action.[48]

The development in Indian philosophy towards a moral notion of karma can be seen in the attitudes towards the transferability of merit. The development towards a moral notion of karma was associated with the appearance of certain sociological and sociopsychological factors in Indian culture. One of those factors should be mentioned specially. Brahmanism (800 BC–400 AD), which was the predecessor of the classical Hinduism (400–1800 AD), developed into a tolerant and adapting religion in which almost the only doctrinal demand that connected different sects was the belief in the authority of Vedic literature. However, religious reform movements arose in India about 700–300 BC which were heterodox in regard to that demand. The most important among these sects were Jainism and Buddhism, with the emergence of which individualism grew in Indian thinking. The growth of individualism strengthened the denial that merit can be transferred.[49] However, in Buddhism, this denial never received comprehensive support.[50] As is known, transfer of merit is a prevailing part of the religious practice in Mahāyāna Buddhism, as well as in Hīnayāna lay Buddhism.[51]

The examples of transfer of merit presented so far have been associated with different ritual practices. A common feature in them is that transfer of merit is thought to take place between dead relatives and their offspring, or between the living members of a family.[52] Yet transfer of merit can take place also, for example, between a disciple and his teacher, or between people and their ruler. The latter kind of transfer of merit – transfer of merit between people and their ruler – is often accompanied by another special idea related to the notion of merit in Indian philosophy and religion; namely, by the idea of group karma.[53]

Although certain ritual practices have provided the original context of transfer of merit, not all the classical examples of transfer of merit are connected with rituals. According to a common view, when a person has contact, especially at a meal, with other people he or she may acquire good karma or bad karma from the person with whom he or she is in contact. For example, some Tamils believe that a person can receive good karma by accepting cooked food from another person, especially from a

Brahmin or holy man. Correspondingly, food offered by thieves or prostitutes is believed to transfer bad karma.[54]

A particular form of transfer of merit is connected with the Mahāyāna belief in bodhisattvas ('a being aspiring to enlightenment') who are thought to do good not only for their own spiritual advance towards perfection (*nirvāṇa*), but also to relieve the suffering of others.[55] In that context, transfer of merit is thought to be based on the vow of the bodhisattva to be reborn, no matter how many times it may be necessary, in order to attain the full Buddhahood, not for himself or herself alone, but for the benefit of all sentient beings.[56] The bodhisattva's way of life consists of the compassion-motivated development of six perfections (*pāramitā*) which are generosity (*dāna*), virtue (*śīla*), patience (*kṣānti*), vigour (*vīrya*), meditation (*dhyāna*), and wisdom (*prajñā*).[57] A bodhisattva's effort to attain these perfections is then believed to advance the attainment of liberation of other people as well. The vow of the bodhisattva obliges him never to refuse to help other people.[58] Yet carrying out this obligation is not merely a question of obedience. The bodhisattvas are thought to be full of loving-kindness (*mettā*), capable of abolishing the bad karma of those in need.[59] The ability of bodhisattvas to annul the bad karma of others is founded in their perfection and merit accumulated through skilful (*kuśala*) actions in incalculable lives.

One typical setting where the removal of bad karma is thought to take place is in instruction given by a bodhisattva. It is assumed that parts of the karmic outcomes of the good deeds done by a bodhisattva pass over to his audience by way of his teaching. The good karma of the bodhisattva then is believed to annul the bad karma of his hearers and thereby hasten their attainment of *nirvāṇa*. This idea has been expressed metaphorically by saying that the bodhisattva's lengthened way to *nirvāṇa* shortens the way of his hearers.[60]

One noteworthy aspect in the belief in bodhisattvas is that acceptance of the benefaction of the bodhisattva puts the recipient, in turn, under a moral obligation to strive to bodhisattvahood himself in order to aid in liberating other beings from suffering.[61] Another important aspect of the belief in bodhisattvas is that a bodhisattva is not thought to run the risk of losing his position as a bodhisattva by dedicating (S. *pariṇāmanā*, P. *pattidānā*) his karmic merit to others. The reason for this is that the selfless, compassionate giving away of karmic merits to those in need simultaneously yields him good karma, though he is not aiming at that. In this way, the store of karmic merit of the bodhisattva is inexhaustible.[62]

In comparison to bodhisattvas, the ascetics of the *pāśupata* school of Hinduism act in a completely opposite way. The *pāśupata* ascetics try to exchange their demerits for merits gained through their spectators by humiliating themselves in public through imitations of snoring, erotic gesticulation and acting insane.[63] By being humiliated in these ways, the ascetics are considered to be purified of their demerits and to gain merits for that. The spectators through whom an ascetic is humiliated are in turn believed to gain demerits. Thus, the *pāśupata* ascetics are peculiarly considered to gain merits by provoking people to do wrong. Another idea found in Hinduism is that the devotion to God (*Īśvara*, 'Lord'), who is the author of the law of karma, annuls the devotee's accumulation of bad karma and thereby prevents bad karmic consequences from being materialised. For example, according to the *Bhagavadgītā*, even if a man of very evil conduct devotes himself to Kṛṣṇa, his pious intention (*bhakti* or loving devotion) will count as virtue, his soul will become righteous and he will go to heaven.[54]

5. Summary

I have stated that there are uses of the term merit in Indian religions which also appear in secular contexts, but in addition there are other uses that do not appear in secular contexts. Accordingly, the formal criteria for determining what merit is are the same in religion and outside·it in many cases and according to those criteria, in order for something to be a merit, it must be a good deed or quality. Transfer of merit is a specific doctrine in whose connection the term merit is used with an intention which is not the same as that found in nonreligious contexts. Two main types of transfer of merit can be distinguished. First, several scholars have associated the transfer of merit with ritual practices by which the merit acquired by offspring is thought to be transferred to their dead ancestors for support of their afterlife. Another main type of transfer of merit is connected with Mahāyāna belief in bodhisattvas' loving-kindness towards other beings. This loving-kindness is manifested in bodhisattvas' teachings and other good deeds which are believed to annul the bad karma of those persons with whom bodhisattvas are in contact. Besides these two main types of transfer of merit, the classical texts include examples of a kind of transfer of merit which is not related to ritual practices or actions of bodhisattvas. In the orthodox Hindu schools, in Hīnayāna Buddhism and in Jainism, transfer of merit has been rejected on account of the doctrine of karma according to which the person can acquire karmic outcomes for only those actions he or she has performed by himself.

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NOTES

[1] In the years 1976, 1978 and 1982, three conferences on the doctrine of karma and the doctrine of rebirth were held by the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) and the Social Science Research Council (SSRC). The conferences resulted in three volumes that treat the doctrine of karma and the doctrine of rebirth from the historical, philosophical, anthropological and psychological points of view: DONIGER, WENDY O'FLAHERTY, (Ed) (1980) *Karma and Rebirth in Classical Indian Traditions* (Berkeley, University of California Press) KEYES, CHARLES F. & DANIEL, E. VALENTINE (Eds) (1983) *Karma. An Antropological Inquiry* (Berkeley, University of California Press); and NEUFELDT, RONALD W. (Ed) (1986) *Karma and Rebirth: Post Classical Developments*, Albany, NY, State University of New York Press.

[2] Cf. MAVRODES, GEORGE I. (1988) *Revelation in Religious Belief* (Philadelphia, Temple University Press), p. 88.

[3] Joel Feinberg considers the function of a system of moral debits and credits. According to him, 'the purpose of such a system, I should think, is to provide people with an incentive for doing what they otherwise might not want to do' (FEINBERG, JOEL (1970) *Doing and Deserving. Essays in the Theory of Responsibility* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press), p. 23).

[4] The term quality is to be taken in a wide sense here. A quality regarded as the basis for receipt of appreciation or reward can, in addition to being an 'intrinsic quality' like beauty, intelligence or strength, also be an 'extrinsic quality' like ownership or possession of an object regarded as good in some respect, or like membership in a group sharing a common merit.

[5] Cf. WESTERMARCK, EDWARD (1939) *Christianity and Morals* (London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner), pp. 117–118: '... the moral emotions of disapproval or approval, in their capacity of retributive emotions, are hostile or friendly attitudes of mind towards living beings conceived as causes of pain or pleasure. They cannot admit that a person is punished or rewarded on account of another person's behaviour. There cannot be a merit by transfer.'

[6] Another presupposition of a standard system of reward and punishment is that rewards and punishments are distributed in proportion to merits and demerits.

[7] Although no conceptual restriction exists that would prevent the recipient of a reward from giving

that reward to someone else, factual restrictions can exist. For example, the person who gives a reward can see to it that the recipient of the reward will not give it to anyone else. The reward can also be such that no one else besides the original recipient has any use for it.

[8] See, for example, BENTHAM, JEREMY (1789/1823) *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, ch. V, pp. 17–33 (in BENTHAM, JEREMY (1970) *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation. The Collected Works of Jeremy Bentham*, BURNS, J.H. & HART, H.L.A. (Eds) London, University of London, The Athlone Press), pp. 46–49); HART, H.L.A. (1992) *Punishment and Responsibility. Essays in the Philosophy of Law* (Oxford, Clarendon Press), pp. 4–5; and HONDERICH, TED (1989) *Punishment. The Supposed Justifications* (Cambridge: Polity Press in association with Basil Blackwell), p. 89.

[9] There are two main types of unintentional actions: actions performed by accident only and actions performed knowingly but unintentionally.

[10] A historical change has been taken place in respect to 'punishing' impersonal things. According to Joel Feinberg, 'in the early centuries of all major legal systems, inanimate objects and animals were "punished" '. FEINBERG, op. cit., note 3, p. 230.

[11] Kaṇāda's *Vaiśeṣika Aphorisms* includes the following list of the good deeds and events which cause the emergence of an unseen potency, called *adṛṣṭa*, that carries the merit (*dharma*), as well as the demerit (*adharma*), of intentional actions: 'Inaugurations, fasting, continence, residence in the family of a spiritual guide, life in the forest, sacrifice, almsgiving, oblation, the cardinal points, constellations, sacred texts, seasons, and religious observance, conduce to invisible result.' *Vaiśeṣikas ūtra* VI.2.2 (GOUGH, ARCHIBALD EDWARD (Trans.) (1975) *The Vaiśeshika Aphorisms of Kaṇāda. With comments from the Upaskāra of Śankara Miśra and the Vivritti of Jaya-Nārāyaṇa Tarkapañchānana*, 2nd Indian edn (New Delhi, Oriental Books), p. 184). Cf. BABB, LAWRENCE A. (1975) *The Divine Hierarchy: Popular Hinduism in Central India* (New York, Columbia University Press), p. 92: 'Good deeds produce merit, but of all good deeds the most potent are ritual acts: keeping fasts, regular worship of deities, and above all, acts of charity – especially giving to Brahmans or wandering medicants.' See also CRAWFORD, S. CROMWELL (1982) *The Evolution of Hindu Ethical Ideas. Asian Studies at Hawaii 28*. 2nd rev. edn (Honolulu, The University Press of Hawaii, Asian Studies Program), pp. 128–129.

[12] Kaṇāda lived probably between AD 50 and 150, or at any rate earlier than Nāgārjuna, the founder of the Mādhyamika school, which flourished in AD 200. See GOEL, ARUNA (1984) *Indian Philosophy. Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Modern Science* (New Delhi, Sterling), pp. 27–28.

[13] *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* I.1.2. (GOUGH, op. cit., note 11, p. 2; cf. VON GLASENAPP, HELMUTH (1985) *Die Philosophie der Inder. Eine Einführung in ihre Geschichte und ihre Lehren*. Kröners Taschenausgabe 195, edn (Stuttgart, Alfred Kröner), p. 237). See also the comment on the second *Vaiśeṣika Aphorism* from the *Vivritti* of Jaya-Nārāyaṇa Tarkapañchānana: '... it is fitting that merit should be explained, inasmuch as, by reason of its effecting the highest object of man which consists of paradise and liberation, it is to be acquired by those who are desirous of enjoyment and of emancipation' GOUGH, op. cit., note 11, p. 2.

[14] *Vaiśeṣikasūtra* I.1.4. (ibid, p. 4).

[15] Ibid., p. 6.

[16] The Sanskrit word *pariṇāmanā* means literally 'bending around', but it is usually translated in English as 'transformation', 'ripening' or 'diversion'. The Sanskrit word *puṇyānumodanā* means 'acceptance of merit'. The Pāli word *pattidāna* means 'giving of merit', *parivaṭṭa* 'round', 'circle' or 'succession', and *pattānumodanā* 'approval of merit'.

[17] Most schools of the Stra philosophy were fully developed after about AD 200, though the origin of the Sūtra philosophy can be traced to as early as 800 BC.

[18] According to the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika schools, there are 24 *guhas*, some being material and others being mental: color (*rūpa*), taste (*rasa*), smell (*gandha*), touch (*sparśa*), sound (*śabda*), number (*saṅkhyā*), magnitude (*parimiti*), distinctness (*pṛthaktva*), conjunction (*saṁyoga*), disjunction (*vibhāga*), nearness (*paratva*), remoteness (*aparatva*), heaviness (*gurutva*), fluidity (*dravatva*), viscosity (*sneha*), knowledge (*buddhi*), pleasure (*sukha*), pain (*duḥkha*), desire (*icchā*), aversion (*dveṣa*), effort (*prayatna*), tendency (*saṁskāra*), merit (*dharma*) and demerit (*adharma*). In the Vaiśeṣika system, quality (*guṇa*) is one of the seven categories and the six others are substance (*dravya*), action (*karma*), universality (*sāmānya*), particularity (*visesa*) and inherence (*samavāya*). See VON GLASENAPP, op. cit., note B, pp. 237–238 and 247.

[19] See *Nyāyakusumāñjali* I.4–5, 48–49 and 111–115 (POTTER, KARL H. (Ed.) (1977) *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*, Vol. 2. *Indian Metaphysics and Epistemology: The Tradition of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika*

up to Gaṅgeśa (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), pp. 558–559, 563 and 566); see also Gautama's *Nyāyasūtras* III.2.38–39; and Śrīdhara's *Nyāyakandalī* 133 (POTTER, ibid., pp. 232 and 517).

[20] KLOSTERMAIER, KLAUS K. (1984) *Mythologies and Philosophies of Salvation in the Theistic Traditions of India. Editions in the Study of Religion 5*. Published for the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion (Waterloo, Ontario, Wilfrid Laurier University Press), p. 181.

[21] See *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* II.1.34–36, II.3.41–42; *Bṛhadāraraṇyakopaniṣadbhāṣya* II.1.16–17; and *Bhagavadgītābhāṣya* IV.11–14 (POTTER, KARL H. (Ed.) (1981) *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies* vol 3. *Advaita Vedānta up to Śaṅkara and His Pupils* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press), pp. 152–153, 168, 188–189 and 299); see also POTTER, KARL H. (1980) The karma theory and its interpretation in some Indian philosophical 'systems, in DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, op. cit., note 1, pp. 241–267., p. 263; and REICHENBACH, BRUCE R. (1990) *The Law of Karma. A Philosophical Study* (Honolulu, University of Honolulu), p. 152.

[22] *Mahābhārata, Śāntiparva* XII.279.15 and 21 (critical edition) (cf. XII.149.34 and 37) (quoted from KANE, PANDURANG VAMAN (1977) *History of Dharmaśāstra. Ancient and Mediæval Religious and Civil Law*, Vol. V, Part II, Government Oriental Series, Class B, No. 6, 2nd edn. (Poona, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute), p. 1595). See also *Rāmāyaṇa, Āyodhyākāṇḍā* II.57.4: 'Whatever a person does, be it good or evil, ... he receives in like measure, the direct result of the deeds he has done himself', (GOLDMAN, ROBERT P. (Ed.) (1986) *Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki: An Epic of Ancient India* Vol. II: *Āyodhyākāṇḍā*. Princeton Library of Asian Translations (Introduction, Trans. and annotation by POLLOCK SHELDON I. (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press), p. 204); and *Manusmṛti* IV.240: 'Single is each being born; single it dies; single it enjoys (the reward of its) virtue; single (it suffers the punishment of its) sin' (MÜLLER, F. MAX (Ed.) (1982) *The Laws of Manu. The Sacred Books of the East 25*. (Transl. with extracts from seven commentaries by BÜHLER, G. (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), p. 166). Cf. WALLI, KOSHELYA (1977) *Theory of Karman in Indian Thought*. Bharata Manisha Research Series 10 (Varanasi, Bharata Manisha), pp. 310–311: 'There is a rule recognized in Indian philosophy which ... implies that the principle of justice demands the experience of pleasure and pain which happens to a soul must be due to the action of Dharma and Adharma present in that very soul. In other words the doer of an action himself must reap the consequences of his action and not another person. One cannot enjoy or suffer in consequence of an action done by another.'

[23] See DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, op. cit., note 1, p. 4; and FULLER, C.J. (1992) *The Camphor Flame. Popular Hinduism and Society in India* (New Delhi, Viking), p. 246.

[24] It is worth nothing that in Western studies the Theravāda tradition is almost exclusively considered in the light of Ceylonese Buddhism, although there are Theravādins also, for example, in Myanmar, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia. For the political reasons Western researchers have been able to do fieldwork studies of that tradition mainly in Sri Lanka. This may have affected the Western view of Theravāda by making it be one-sided.

[25] See McDERMOTT, JAMES P. (1980) Karma and rebirth in early Buddhism, in Doniger O'Flaherty, op. cit., note 1, pp. 165–192, p. 190, which includes the reference to *Saṁyattanikāya* III.43 (WOODWARD, F.L. (Trans.) with intro. by DAVIDS, RHYS (1975) *The Book of the Kindred Sayings (Saṁyutta-Nikāya) or Grouped Suttas*, Part III, Translation Series 13 (London, The Pali Text Society), p. 37). The *Saṁyattanikāya* includes also the idea that 'no more than prayers can raise a rock sunk in the water can they speed a man heavenward who has sunk to a lower state of existence because of his own evil actions'. McDERMOTT, op. cit., p. 191 (see *Saṁyattanikāya* IV. 311, WOODWARD, F.L. (Trans.) with intro. by DAVIDS RHYS (1972) *The Book of the Kindred Sayings (Saṁyutta-Nikāya) or Grouped Suttas*, Part IV, Translation Series 14. (London, The Pali Text Society), p. 219).

[26] *Saṁyattanikāya* I. 227 (DAVIDS, RHYS (Trans.) assisted by THERA, SŪRIYAGODA SUMANGALA (1971) *The Book of the Kindred Sayings (Saṁyutta-Nikāya) or Grouped Suttas*, Part I. *Kindred Sayings with Verses (Sagāthā-Vagga)*, Translation Series 7 (London, Luzac for the Pali Text Society), p. 293). See also TILLEKERATNE, ASANGA (1996) Kamma, in WEERARATNE W.G. (Ed)., *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*. Vol. VI. *Fascicle 1: Jarā–Kāśyapīya* (Ed.), (Colombo, The Government of Sri Lanka), pp. 114–121, 116.

[27] WILLIAMS, PAUL (1996) *Mahāyāna Buddhism. The Doctrinal Foundations*. The Library of Religious Beliefs and Practices (London, Routledge), p. 208.

[28] SCHUMANN, HANS WOLFGANG (1973) *Buddhism. An Outline of its Teachings and Schools* (Trans. by FENERSTEIN GEORG, (London, Rider), p. 92. On the relation of Mahāyāna and Theravāda Buddhism in regard to the idea of transfer of merit, see also SCHOPEN, GREGORY (1984) Two

problems in the history of Indian Buddhism: the layman/monk distinction and the doctrines of the transference of merit, *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 10, pp. 9–47, pp. 36–37, 42–43 and 46–47; BECHERT, HEINZ (1963) Zur Frühgeschichte des Mahāyāna-Buddhismus, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 113, pp. 530–535, p. 535; BECHERT, HEINZ (1973) Notes on the formation of Buddhist sects and the origins of Mahāyāna, in Cultural Department of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany (eds) *German Scholars on India. Contributions to Indian Studies*, Vol. I (Varanasi; Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office), pp. 16–18; BECHERT, HEINZ (1992) Buddha-Field and transfer of merit in a Theravāda source, *Indo–Iranian Journal* 35, 23, pp. 95–108. pp. 100, 103 and 105; and WILLIAMS, op. cit., note 27, p. 208.

[29] JAINI, PADMANABH S. (1980) Karma and the problem of rebirth in Jainism, in DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, op. cit., pp. 235–236; and DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, op. cit., note 1 pp. 9–10.

[30] (*Dvātriṃśikā*) *Nitya-naimittika-pāṭhāvalī*, Karanja, 1956, p. 22 (Quoted from JAINI op. cit., note 29, p. 235).

[31] I have seen in no text the idea that transfer of merit could be the sufficient reason for enlightenment. On the relation of meritorious actions (*puñña*) or moral conduct (*sīla*) to *nirvāṇa*, see REICHENBACH, op. cit., note 21, pp. 173–175; KEOWN, DAMIEN (1992) *The Nature of Buddhist Ethics* (Houndmills, The Macmillan Press), pp. 46, 89–90 (a critique of Winston King's and Melfrod Spiro's ideas of the difference between 'the ethic of kamma' and 'the ethic of nibbāna'), 116–118, 121 and 124–125; and TILLEKERATNE, op. cit., note 26, p. 121. See also SCHOPEN, op. cit., pp. 32 and 37–38. Reichenbach and Keown hold that good deeds are relevant to the achievement of *nirvāṇa* and that through good deeds one participates in nibbānic values.

[32] See REICHENBACH, op. cit., note 21, p. 152.

[33] These kinds of rituals were, for example, Vedic *Yajñas. Yajñas* were sacrificial ceremonies performed by priests for someone who had hired them for that purpose by paying the prescribed fee. Daya Krishna states that one constant and essential element in different *yajñas* was 'the relationship between the *yajamāna* and the *ṛtviks*, that is, the one for whom the *yajña* is being performed, and those who actually perform it'. Krishna claims that '*yajña*, by common consent, is considered to be the heart of the Vedas and the doctrine of *karma*, the most distinctively significant feature of Indian thought about action' (KRISHNA, DAYA (1996) *Indian Philosophy. A Counter Perspective*. Oxford India Paperbacks (Delhi, Oxford University Press), p. 172). However, *yajña* and the doctrine of karma are in conflict with each other: 'The hard core of the theory of the *yajāna* is that one can reap the fruit of somebody else's action, while the hard core of the theory of karma denies the very possibility of such a situation ever arising in a universe that is essentially moral in nature' (ibid., p. 175). Cf. KANE, PANDURANG VAMAN (1973) *History of Dharmaśāstra. Ancient and Mediæval Religious and Civil Law*, Vol. IV, Government Oriental Series, Class B, No. 6. 2nd edn. (Poona, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute), p. 335. On the relation of the *yajamāna* and the *ṛtviks*, see also TULL, HERMAN W. (1989) *The Vedic Origins of Karma. Cosmos as Man in Ancient Indian Myth and Ritual.* SUNY Series in Hindu Studies (Albany, NY, State University of New York Press), pp. 34–35 and 107.

[34] See MALALASEKERA, GEORGE P. (1967) 'Transference of merit' in Ceylonese Buddhism, *Philosophy East and West*, 17(1), pp. 85–90, 86–87; GOMBRICH, RICHARD F. (1971) 'Merit transference' in Sinhalese Buddhism: a case study of the interaction between doctrine and practice *History of Religions* 11(2) pp. 203–219, 206, 210 and 214–215; KNIPE, DAVID M. (1977) Sapiṇḍīkaraṇa: the Hindu rite of entry into heaven, in REYNOLDS, FRANK & WAUGH, EARLE H. (Eds) *Religions Encounters with Death, Insight from the History and Anthropology of Religions* (Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State University Press), pp. 111–124, p. 112; DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, op. cit., note 1, pp. 3–4, 10–11 and 33–34; and BECHERT (1992), op. cit., p. 100. The idea that a transfer of merit is included in the *śrāddha* is, however, controversial. For example, Rajbali Pandey says nothing of transfer of merit when he explains the idea of *śrāddha*. In view of Pandey's explanation of the *śrāddha*, one acquires no merit by the performance of *śrādha* because it is a duty to be done (*naimittika-karma*) (PANDEY, RAJBALI (1994) *Hindu Saṃskāras. Socio-Religious Study of the Hindu Sacraments* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), pp. 235–236, 238 and 272–273. In general, according to Hindu scriptures (*śāstras*), if a man does not perform the *śrāddha* after the death of his parents then he simply fails to do his duty towards them and some sort of demerit occurs as a consequence of this failure to do the duty. Pandey holds that the offering of ritual food (*piṇḍa-dāna*) to dead ancestors or the custom of feeding Brahmins at the time of performing the (*śrāddha* is only for helping the departed souls to reach their destination after death (Ibid., pp. 236, 242, 246 and 265; see also KANE (1973), op. cit., note 33, pp. 334–336; and KANE (1977),

op. cit., note 22, p. 1598. In the light of Pandey's and Kane's views, the idea of transfer of merit can be applied to the conceptualisation of *śrāddha* merely as an analogy: the practice of *śrāddha* clearly assumes – analogously to the transfer of merit – that the actions of one person can affect the destiny of another in the hereafter.

[35] GOMBRICH, op. cit., note 34, pp. 208–209; see also BECHERT (1992), op. cit., note 34, p. 100.

[36] MALALASEKERA, op. cit., note 34, p. 88; GOMBRICH, op. cit., note 34, pp. 207, 209–210, 214 and 216; and GOMBRICH, RICHARD E. (1988) *Theravada Buddhism. A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo*. The Library of Religious Beliefs and Practices (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul), p. 126.

[37] DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, op. cit., note 1, p. 12.

[38] A comment from *The Upaskāra of Śankara Misra* to *Vaiśesikasūtra* (VI. 1.6) includes the idea that if the performer of a rite is evil, no merit will be accured to the ancestors: 'When evil Brāhmans, unworthy recipients, are fed at the obsequial rites, no fruit accrues from this to the ancestor; or ... the result of the obsequial rites does not accrue to the ancestors' (GOUGH, op. cit., p. 179).

[39] In a *vrata*, the idea of making amends is that good deeds enable the person to do good and even better deeds in the future by improving his character and capacity for good actions. According to Tilmann Vetter, Mahāyāna texts refer to that kind of improvement of character by the Sanskrit word *parināmayati* ('bend'; p(arināmaya) 'ripen', 'mature'; p(arināma) 'transformation', 'development', 'changing') which means, in that context, devoting good karma to a goal that does not inherently orginate from it, especially to enlightenment. This can take place even by the good karma of other people through the fact that a transfer of merit occurs. See VETTER, TILLMANN (1988) *The Ideas and Meditative Practices of Early Buddhism* (LEIDEN, E.J. BRILL), p. 99, n. 21.

[40] WADLEY, SUSAN S. (1983) *Vrats: Transformers of Destiny*, in KEYES, CHARLES F. & DANIEL, E. VALENTINE (Eds) *Karma. An Antropological Inquiry* (Berkeley, University of California Press), pp. 147–162, 147–149 and 158–159.

[41] TULL, op. cit., note 33, p. 2.

[42] On the relation of the Vedic ritualistic view of karma and the Upanisadic moral doctrine of karma, see COLLINS, STEVEN (1982) *Selfless Persons. Imagery and Thought in Theravāda Buddhism* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press), p. 55–58; and TULL, op. cit., note 33, p. 41.

[43] *Brhad-āranyaka Upanisad* III.2.13: 'punyo vai punyena karmanā bhavati, pāpah pāpeneti' (see RADHAKRISHNAN, S. (Ed. and Trans.) (1990) *The Principal Upanisads*. Centenary Edition (London, Unwin Hyman), p. 217). Cf. *Brhad-āranyaka Upanisad* IV.4.5 (ibid., p. 272); *Katha Upanisad* II.5.6–7 (MÜLLER, F. MAX (Ed. and trans) (1965) *The Upanishads*, Part II. *The Sacred Books of the East 25.* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), pp. 18–19; *Chāndogya Upanisad* III.14.1 and V.10.7 (RADHAKRISHNAN, op. cit., pp. 391 and 433); and *Śatapatha Brāhmana* VI.2.2.27 (MÜLLER, F. MAX (1966) *The Śatapatha-Brāhmana (according to the text of the Mādhyandina School)*, Part III. *The Sacred Books of the East 41* (trans. by EGGELING, JULIUS 2nd edn. (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), pp. 180–181).

[44] The context in which the verse (III.2.13) is included – a discussion between two sages, Yājñavalkya and Jāratkārava Ārtabhāga – suggests that karma was a secret doctrine not to be explained to just anyone. See POTTER, op. cit., note 21, p. 266; and BASHAM, A.L. (1989) *The Origins and Development of Classical Hinduism*. (Ed. and annotated by ZYSK, KENNETH G. (Boston, Beacon Press), pp. 43–44. In so far as karma is taken to be a moral doctrine, the view of karma as a secret runs counter to the idea that moral views should be generally approved.

[45] Heinz Bechert dates the historical Buddha between *ca* 400 BC and *ca* 350 BC (BECHERT, HEINZ (1991) The date of the Buddha – an open question of ancient Indian history, in H. BECHERT (Ed.) *The Dating of the Historical Buddha (Die Datierung des historischen Buddha)* Part I. Symposien zur Buddhismusforschung, IV, 1. Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. Philologisch-historische Klasse, dritte Folge, Nr. 189 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht), pp. 222–236, 236)

[46] For example, Richard Gombrich has presented the view of the Buddha as the introducer of the moral concept of karma: '... (for brahminism morality remained mainly extrinsic, like ritual: realized in action which derives its value from the social context. It was the Buddha who first completely ethicized the concept: in Hinduism ritual and moral obligations remain lumped together' (GOMBRICH (1988), op. cit., note 36, p. 46).

[47] *Anguttara Nikāya* III.415 (McDERMOTT (1980), op. cit., note 25, p. 181; cf. HARE, E.M. (Tran.) with intro. by DAVIDS, RHYS (1973) *The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Anguttara-Nikāya) or More-numbered Suttas*, Vol. III, *The Books of the Fives and Sixes.* Translation Series 25. (London,

The Pali Text Society), p. 294). Cf. *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam* IV. 1b: 'What is action? – It is volition and that which is produced through volition.' (VASUBANDHU (1988) *Abhidharmakoś-abhāṣyam*. Vol. II (ch. III: The *Loka-nirdeśa* or 'Instruction concerning the World'; ch. IV: The *Karma-nirdeśa* or 'Instruction concerning Karma') (by LOUIS DE LA VALLÉE POUSSIN. English Trans. by, LEO M. PRUDEN) (Berkeley, CA, Asian Humanities Press), p. 551.) Tillekeratne interprets this so that volition is a necessary condition of action, but not a sufficient condition of it. In addition, the actual action has to take place for the karmic action to be deemed complete (TILLEKERATNE, op. cit., note 26, pp. 115–116. In the Buddhist theory of will (see *Anguttara Nikāya* III. 415), two types of volition are distinguished: first, the pure volition called *cetanākamman* or 'action which is volition' which involves the intention to engage in a certain kind of activity ('such and such an action'). This is the initial or preparatory stage of willing, after which one can produce another volition which involves the intention to do a certain act in conformity with what has been previously willed (*cetayitvā*). An action which is performed after having been willed is called *cetayitvā kamman* or 'willed action' (VASUBANDHU, op. cit., p. 559). According to Paul J. Griffiths, 'Buddhist theoreticians have consistently held as true both the axiom that there are no persons (if persons are understood as enduring substances) and the axiom that every morally qualified volitional action has morally qualified volitional effects upon its agent in the future' (GRIFFITHS, PAUL J. (1986) *On Being Mindless: Buddhist Meditation And The Mind-Body Problem* (La Salle, IL, Open Court), p. 92). Thus, according to the Buddhist view, a harmful action performed without intending to do that particular action is not unwholesome nor blameworthy and generates no bad karmic consequence. In some respects, this is a similar view to that of common secular morality. See *Milindapañha* 166 (IV, 3, 7) (MÜLLER, F. MAX (Ed.) (1965) *The Questions of King Milinda*, Part I. *The Sacred Books of the East 35* (Trans. from Pali by T.W. RHYS DAVIDS) (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), p. 235). See also ALLEN, G.F. (1959) *The Buddha's Philosophy. Selections from the Pāli Canon and an Introductory Essay* (London, George Allen and Unwin), p. 63; HARVEY, PETER (1995) Criteria for judging the unwholesomeness of actions in the texts of Theravāda Buddhism, *The Journal of Buddhist Ethics*. 2, pp. 140–151, 144; and KALUPAHANA, DAVID J. (1996) Kamma, in W.G. WEERARATNE (Ed.) *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, Vol. VI, Fascicle 1: Jarā–Kāśyapīya (Colombo, The Government of Sri Lanka), pp. 108–114, p. 111.

[48] 'The moral responsibility of the individual is a basic feature of early Buddhist doctrine, the teaching of the Pali Canon (and other versions of the canon in as far as they are known to us). It is the Buddha's solution to the problem of evil: one's suffering is due to one's former skin, in this or a previous life, just as one's well-being is due to one's former goodness. This is the Buddhist doctrine of karma ("action"); the term denotes both the original moral act and its power for subsequent reward and punishment. Moreover, the morality of an action depends solely on the intention behind it: intention (*cetanā*) is karma.' GOMBRICH op. cit., note 34, (1971), pp. 203–204.

[49] REICHENBACH, op. cit., note 21, p. 152. On the sociological and sociopsychological factors that affected the development of the doctrine of karma, see BASHAM, op. cit., note 44, pp. 39–41. On individualism in Hinduism from a comparative point of view, see DUMONT, LOUIS (1980) *Homo Hierarchicus. The Caste System and Its Implications. A Phoenix book 601* (Trans. by Mark Sainsbury, Louis Dumont and Basia Gulati) (Chigago, The University of Chicago Press) [French original work *Homo hierarchicus. Essai sur le système des castes*. Bibliothèque des sciences humaines (Paris, Éditions Gallimard, 1966).], pp. 267–286 (1966, pp. 324–350). I have used the notion of individualism because it is employed in the recent discussion, without considering the possible adequacy or inadequacy of that term.

[50] Karl Potter has suggested that in Indian philosophy and religion there are two main orientations with regard to actions; on the one hand, the 'transactional' orientation which assumes the positive approach of action (*pravṛtti*), including, for example, the practice of transfer of merit, and, on the other hand, the 'philosophical' (or 'non-transactional') orientation which assumes the negative approach of withdrawal from action (*nivṛtti*). POTTER (1980) op. cit., note 21, pp. 265–267. See also LONG, J. BRUCE (1980) The Concepts of Human Action and Rebirth in the *Mahābhārata*, in DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, op. cit., note 1, pp. 38–60, p. 60; and LARSON, GERALD JAMES (1980) Karma as a 'Sociology of Knowledge' or 'Social Psychology' of Process/Praxis, in DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, op. cit., note 1, pp. 303–316, p. 304.

[51] Heinz Bechert dates the Buddhist doctrine of transfer of merit (*pattānumodanā*) in its fully developed form in the period between the 5th and 7th centuries AD (BECHERT (1992) op. cit., note 34, pp. 99–100).

[52] At the end of the *Mahābhārata* (*Svargārohaṇaparvan* XVIII.2) there is a well-known story about how the meritoriousness of one member of a family helps the other members of the same family: Pandu's first son, the oldest prince of Pāṇḍavas, Yudhiṣṭhira, refuses to go into Heaven. Instead he wants to stay in hell in order to mitigate the sufferings of his four brothers by his pleasing and pure breath, which arises from his virtuousness. His brothers get into heaven, but Yudhiṣṭhira is tested by the experience of an illusion of the horrors of hell. In the end, also Yudhiṣṭhira himself gets into heaven. See *The Mahābhārata* (1965), An English version based on selected verses by Chakravarthi V. Narasimhan. Originally published as number LXXI of the *Records of Civilization: Sources and Studies* (New York, Columbia University Press), pp. 211–214. See also DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, op. cit., note 1, pp. 32–33. According to some texts, the direction of transfer is from the parents to the child (DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, op. cit., note 1, pp. 34–36.

[53] In MCDERMOTT, JAMES P. (1976) Is there group karma in Theravāda Buddhism?, *Numen* 23, pp. 67–80, the author categorises three different types of group karma: 'These are "overflow karma", "the karma of family (or communal relationship)", and "national" or "state-aided karma". The last of these is of three types: (1) that where the people of a state act in concert, (2) that where the government performs karmically effective actions – whether good or evil – on behalf of its people, (3) and that where through its action the states serves as a booster mechanism through which individual karma may work itself out.' (Ibid., p. 75.) See also REICHENBACH, op. cit., note 21, pp. 142–143.

[54] DANIEL, SHERYL B. (1983) The tool box approach of the Tamil to the issues of moral responsibility and human destiny, in KEYES & VALENTINE, op. cit., note 1, pp. 27–62, p. 29. In general, food is the most common medium of transfer of merit. See, for example, DONIGER O'FLAHERTY, op. cit., note 1, pp. 12 and 29. Furthermore, the most common merit in Buddhist piety is the feeding of monks. See COLLINS, op. cit., note 4, pp. 219–221; and GOMBRICH (1988), op. cit., note 36, p. 126.

[55] Mahāyāna means, literally, 'great vehicle'. However, the Mahāyānists in their texts often refer to the Mahāyāna as the 'Vehicle of the Bodhisattvas'. See SCHUMANN, op. cit., note 28, p. 178.

[56] The *Diamond Sutra* (*Vajrcchedikā*) involves the following vow of the bodhisattva: 'As many beings as there are in the universe of beings, ... all these I must lead to Nirvana, into that Realm of Nirvana which leaves nothing behind.' CONZE, EDWARD (Trans.) (1958) *Buddhist Wisdom Books* (containing *The Diamond Sutra* and *The Heart Sutra*) (London, George Allen & Unwin), p. 25). Cf.: '... the vow of the Bodhisattva is to "become a Buddha, a protector of the unprotected, in a world blind and without protector" ' *Abhidharmakośabhāsyam* III. 95–96.3 (YASUBANDHU, op. cit., note 47, p. 486). Beatrice Suzuki gives four vows of bodhisattvas: '1 To save all beings. 2 To destroy all evil passions. 3 To learn the Truth and teach it to others. 4 To lead all beings towards Buddhahood'. SUZUKI, BEATRICE LANE (1990) *Mahayana Buddhism*, 4th edn (London, Unwin Hyman), p. 61. On the vow of the bodhisattva, see also DUTT, NALINAKSHA (1978) *Mahāyāna Buddhism* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), pp. 103–105; and WILLIAMS, op. cit., note 27, pp. 49–54. Williams states that contrary to several Western textbooks on Buddhism, the bodhisattva does not postpone *nirvāṇa* nor turn back from *nirvāṇa* in order to help all other sentient beings achieve *nirvāṇa* first. At least in Tibetan practice, the merit from virtuous deeds is always directed towards obtaining full Buddhahood (or the full *nirvāṇa* of the Buddha) in order to be able to help others most effectively. WILLIAMS, op. cit., note 27, pp. 52–54.

[57] HARVEY, PETER (1994) Buddhism, in J. Holm with J Bowker (Eds) *Human Nature and Destiny. Themes in Religious Studies*. (London, Pinter, pp. 9–38, pp. 34–35; and WILLIAMS, op. cit., note 27, pp. 204–214.

[58] See GOMBRICH (1971), op. cit., note 34, p. 204; and SCHUMANN, op.cit, note 28, pp. 127, 130 and 174.

[59] According to a section in the fourth chapter of the *Abhidharmakośabhāsyam*, 'the Bodhisattva: this great-souled one, who yet possesses the most sublime perfections, acts through pure compassion; he acts without egoism, like a dog, in the presence of all creatures; he bears, on the part of all creatures, outrages and bad treatment; he assumes all fatiguing and painful tasks'. *Abhidharmakoś-abhāsyam* IV.108c–d (VASUBANDHU, op. cit., note 47, p. 691). See also HARVEY op. cit., note 57, p. 13.

[60] BECHERT (1973), op. cit., note 28, pp. 15–16; and BECHERT (1992), op. cit., note 34, pp. 98–99. Cf. WILLIAMS, op. cit., note 27, p. 208.

[61] SCHUMANN, op. cit., note 28, p. 178; and BECHERT (1973), op. cit., note 28, p. 18.

[62] SCHUMANN, op. cit., note 28, p. 111.

[63] OBERHAMMER, GERHARD (1984) *Wahrheit und Transzendenz. Ein Beitrag zur Spiritualität des Nyāya*. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, philosophisch-historisch Klasse, Sitzungs-berichte, 424. Band-Veröffentlichungen der Kommission für Sprachen und Kulturen Südasiens, Heft 18 (Wien, Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften), pp. 178–181 and 186–187: *Pāśupata* is one of the Śaiva sects whose followers worship Śiva as the lord (*pati*) of the individual (*paśu*) souls.

[64] 'However evil a man's livelihood may be, let him but worship Me with love and serve no other, then shall he be reckoned among the good indeed, for his resolve is right. Right soon will his self be justified and win eternal rest. Arjuna, be sure of this: none who worships Me with loyalty-and-love is lost in Me. For whosoever makes Me his haven, base-born though he may be, yes, women too and artisans, even serfs, theirs it is to tread the highest way.' *Bhagavadgītā*, Yoga of Royal Knowledge and the Royal Mystery IX. 30–32 (*The Bhagavad-Gītā* (1969) With a commentary based on the original sources by R.C. ZAEHNER (Oxford, Oxford University Press), pp. 77 and 285–286). 'But those who cast off all their works on Me, solely intent on Me, and meditate on Me in spiritual exercise, leaving no room for others, [and so really] do Me honour, these will I lift up on high out of the ocean of recurring death, and that right soon, for their thoughts are fixed me.' *Bhagavadgītā*, Bhakti-yoga XII. 6–7 (ibid., pp. 88 and 327). Cf. *Bhagavadgītā*, Karma-yoga III.30–31 ibid., pp. 56 and 172–174); XVIII.64–66 (ibid., pp. 108 and 400–401); *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* V.5.6,10–11, (SHASTRI, J.L. (Ed.) (1986) *The Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Part II. *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology*, Series 8 (Trans. and annotated by GANESH VASUDEO TAGORE) (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), pp. 655–656); VII.7 29–36 (SHASTRI, J.L. (1976) *The Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Part III, *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology*, Series 9. (Trans. and annotated by GANESH VASUDEO TAGORE) (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, pp. 928–929); and XI.20.36 (SHASTRI, J.L. (1978) *The Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Part V. *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology*, Series 11 (Transl. and annotated by GANESH VASUDEO TAGORE) (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), p. 2040). See also DONIGER O'FLAMERTY, op. cit., note 1, p. 28; and BASHAM, op. cit., note 44, p. 92. Classical Hindu scriptures include also more reserved views of the possibility of annulling the accumulation of bad karma in other ways than by suffering from bad karmic consequences. For example, according to the *Devībhāgavata Purāṇa*, 'one must have to enjoy all the good and bad karmic consequences. For until and unless not enjoyed the karmic consequences never perish even in a hundred million kalpas'. Cf. *Gautamadharmasūtra* XIX.5: 'Because the deed does not perish whatever human action it may be, whether good or evil, it cannot be got rid of except by enjoying its consequences; know from me that a man gets rid of good and evil deeds by enjoying (their consequences)' (quoted from KANE (1973), op. cit., note 33, p. 39).

On the Propositional Treatment of *Anatmavāda* in Early Buddhism and *Ātmavāda* in Hinduism

DAVID MONTALVO

ABSTRACT   *As propositions,* Anatmavāda *and* Ātmavāda *are simply negations of one another. Thus whatever serves as a criterion for truth of the one must serve as a criterion for the other. When we treat them both as a* priori *propositions, I claim that we are unable to determine their truth value. But if we treat them both as a* posteriori *propositions, I argue, we are only able to determine their truth value if we attain unqualified omniscience. Because the Hindu account of knowing is far more conducive to the idea of unqualified omniscience, we might be tempted to assert that the empirical verification of these doctrines taken as propositions is far more likely in the Hindu tradition than the early Buddhist one. However, 'empirical omniscience' carries us very far from received views, thus I conclude that it makes no sense to treat these doctrines as truth-valued propositions.*

Introductory Remarks

One sometimes finds in the literature an empirical early Buddhism contrasted favourably with a more metaphysical Hinduism, especially with regard to views on the self. For example:

> The main difference in the attitude of Prajāpati and the Buddha is that the former assumes the existence of an *ātman* and on failing to identify it with any of the states of the personality, continues to assume that it must exist within it and is not satisfied with the results of the purely empirical investigation, while the latter as an Empiricist makes use of the definition of the concept of *ātman* without assuming its existence (or non-existence) and is satisfied with the empirical investigation which shows that no such *ātman* exists because there is no evidence for its existence.[1]

Treating the question of a permanent, substantial self as an *a posteriori* proposition which is to be empirically verified, or as an *a priori* proposition which obtains despite empirical experience has, I will show, certain consequences. It is my contention if we treat *Anatmavāda* and *Ātmavāda* as propositions, we are unable to objectively determine their truth value unless we take them to be synthetic *a posteriori* propositions and we attain unqualified omniscience.[2]

I shall proceed by first formulating both doctrines as propositions, and I will show that whatever the criteria we use to judge the truth of the one, we must for the sake of constistency use the same criteria for the other. I will then show that in treating both of them as *a priori* propositions, whether analytic or synthetic, we are unable to determine their truth values objectively. Next, I will argue that if we choose to treat them as synthetic *a posteriori* (empirical) propositions, we will only discover their truth

values if we attain unqualified omniscience. Some implications of these results will then be discussed in the final section.

Before moving on, the following points should be made clear to the reader:

(1) This paper draws no conclusions pertaining to either the value or the truth of the doctrines in question. Rather, the implications of treating these doctrines as synthetic or analytic *propositions*, which are true either *a priori* or *a posteriori*, are explored. In effect, this paper represents a critique, not of the doctrines, but of interpreting the doctrines as propositions whose truth value we attempt to discover by the facts of experience, independently of experience, or by analysis.[3]

(2) I take propositions to be beliefs justified either by the facts of experience (synthetic *a posteriori* or empirical propositions), by the meanings or definitions of the terms involved (analytic *a priori* propositions), or by metaphysical arguments or principles (synthetic *a priori* propositions). I now proceed to the argument.

Proposition Anatman and Proposition Ātman

I shall formulate Proposition Ātman or PĀ in the following way:

(PĀ) There exists some aspect of self which is eternal and substantial.

In the same vein, Proposition Anatman or PA will be formulated thus:

(PA) It is not the case that there exists some aspect of self which is eternal and substantial.[4]

For the sake of the argument, I will assume that there do exist identifiable aspects of self.

It will be obvious from the above formulations that PA is equivalent to not-PĀ, thus each one is simply negation of the other. Treating these propositions differently with regard to the criteria which we use to determine truth would therefore be inconsistent. To explain: it follows from the fact that each one is simply the negation of the other that whatever determines the truth of the one *eo ipso* determines the falsity of the other. It would be inconsistent to assert, for example, that the truth value of PA is only discoverable *a priori*, but that PĀ has an *a posteriori* truth value, because once the truth of PA is known *a priori*, the falsity of PĀ is also known *a priori*. We therefore find that either both PA and PĀ are analytic *a priori*, or both are synthetic *a priori*, or both are synthetic *a posteriori* propositions.

Determining the Truth Value of PA and PĀ

I will now consider the problem of determining the truth values of PA and PĀ, considered as either analytic *a priori*, synthetic *a priori*, or synthetic *a posteriori* propositions.[5]

(a) PA and PĀ considered as analytic a priori propositions

On my read of analytic *a priori* propositions, the truth value is determined simply by the meanings or definitions of the terms involved. Taking the stronger view that analytic *a priori* propositions must be formally true, i.e. express logical truths on the replacement of the words with symbols, certainly precludes either PA or PĀ from being *a priori* true in the strong analytic sense. Likewise, neither seems to express a formal contradiction,

thus neither is *a priori* false in the strong analytic sense. But these propositions are more in the way of ontological assertions on what there is (or is not), or assertions of what may be predicated of aspects of self, rather than a purely logical assertion such as 'A is A'.

Determing the truth value of PA and PĀ utilising the weaker version of analytic *a priori* truth amounts to defining the terms involved. But since PA is equivalent to not-PĀ, in choosing definitions we are essentially choosing which of the propositions to affirm. Because the truth of the one and the falsity of the other would follow immediately from definitions, choosing a set of definitions which would allow for both to possibly be true would amount, then, to choosing an inconsistent set of definitions! But proving the truth of one and the falsity of the other by definitional fiat seems unsatisfactory. Thus in treating PA and PĀ as analytic *a priori* propositions, we must admit that we cannot objectively determine their truth values because our choice of definitions entails which one we affirm as true.

PA and PĀ considered as synthetic a priori *propositions*

A synthetic proposition is true *a priori* or is deduced from *a priori* principles. Deeming either of them to be *a priori* true outright (and the other false *a priori*) does not seem appropriate, as we have provided no grounds for such a claim, although faith may provide a strong motivation for doing so. But faith aside, it seems more appropriate to provide *a priori* grounds for accepting one over the other as true. But *a priori* grounds for deducing PA have already been provided in the Hindu tradition:

> (25) Uddālaka for the first time in the history of Indian thought expressly suggests a proof of the reality of Being (sat) instead of merely assuming it, when he asserts, some say that ... from non-Being Being was produced. But, verily, my dear, whence could this be? ... how could being be produced from Non-Being?' (ch. 6.2.1, 2).[6]

Also, we find the following argument provided:

> In the third book [of *Vaiśeṣika*] the sūtra deals with the inference of the existence of *ātman*, which is impervious to sense perception, from the fact that there must be some substance in which knowledge, produced by the contact of the senses and their objects, inheres.[7]

The arguments above both seem to show that PĀ is true *a priori* because it is a precondition of existence (in the case of Uddālaka) or a precondition of knowing (in the case of the third book of *Vaiśeṣika*). But the usual Buddhist counter-argument is that the continuity of knowledge and experience is possible without absolute identity or *ātman* passing from one moment to the next.

On the early Buddhist side, even though speculative views were not encouraged, an *a priori* argument for PA could easily be formulated by taking certain Buddhist doctrines as premises which are true *a priori*. As an example, consider the following argument:

(i)   Every thing in the universe consists of the Five Aggregates (*pañcakkhanda*).[8]
(ii) The five Aggregates arise dependently.
(iii) Whatever arises dependently is impermanent (*anicca*).
(iv) The self is a thing in the universe, or is composed of things in the universe.

(v)   Therefore: The self is impermanent.

(vi)   Corollary: (PA) There is no eternal, substantial aspect of self.

The argument hangs on our acceptance *a priori* that all things in the universe consist of the Five Aggregates, which are feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), disposition (*saṅkhāra*), consciousness (*viññāṇa*), and form (*rūpa*), and that these are impermanent. Dividing experience in this way certainly tends to draw one to the conclusion that everything in the universe is impermanent, but one could possibly argue that consciousness is one and unchanging.[9]

Actually, any of the above arguments could also be deemed *a posteriori*, depending on whether the premises are taken to be true *a priori* or *a posteriori* (for the *a posteriori* case, see (c), below). However, when we choose to treat the premises as *a priori* truths, we run into trouble when we attempt to objectively determine the merit of the arguments, as there is no guarantee of a mutually agreeable set of *a priori* truths which will serve as a basis for argument. In fact, if we agree that the conclusion of any purely deductive argument is already contained in its premises, then the set of premises from which we deduce PA *could not possibly* be identical to the set of premises from which we deduce PĀ, unless the chosen set of premises is inconsistent. Thus one derives either proposition according to one's taste in *a priori* truths. But a 'verification' of either proposition according to our taste is unsatisfactory. Opposing factions can easily retreat to the appropriate *a priori* principles from which their favoured proposition can be deduced, no doubt assuming that the opposing *a priori* principles must be false. Since *a priori* principles are, by definition, neither verifiable in our experience nor true by definition only, there is simply no objective ground for our assertion that one is true and the other false, especially since neither has been shown conclusively to be a precondition of experience – the usual read of 'synthetic *a priori*'. Although the truth of each one, considered separately, seems to exclude the other, we are unable to say that either one is logically excluded *a priori*, given what is common to (and hence not contradictory in terms of) both Buddhist and Hindu cosmology. Upon insisting that the truth value of these synthetic *a priori* propositions can be determined, our only course of action would be to take sides by choosing one set of *a priori* principles – a situation similar to what happened when we attempted to treat PA and PĀ as analytic *a priori* propositions. Therefore I conclude that the truth values of PA and PĀ are indeterminate when they are treated as synthetic *a priori* propositions, for without a generally accepted set of first principles, we are at a loss to determine which of the arguments to credit from an objective viewpoint.

(c)   PA and PĀ considered as synthetic a posteriori *propositions*

The truth value of a synthetic *a posteriori* (empirical) proposition is determined by the facts of experience. A proposition of the form 'It is not the case that Y exists', such as PA, would immediately be falsified upon the discovery of the actual existence of Y. Thus if the existence of a substantial, eternal aspect of self were discovered, PĀ would apparently be true and PA false. On the other hand, propositions which assert 'It is not the case that Y exists' are verified if it can be shown that the existence of Y is logically excluded or if the relevant portion of the universe were exhaustively searched for Y with a negative result. As the existence of a substantial, eternal aspect of self does not seem to be logically excluded (see under (a), above), a search would be called for. If, having

completed the search, we find no substantial, eternal aspect of self, then we would be able to affirm PA and deny PĀ.

Of course, these considerations assume that an exhaustive examination of all aspects of self can be adequately translated into some sort of experimental methodology – a not altogether uncontroversial assumption. One would think that this search should include all selves, which would require some detailed knowledge of the selves of other beings. Moreover, it is not clear what an experience of an eternal, substantial aspect of self would be like, as is discussed further below. I do assume, however, that if one asserts that there is no such experimental methodology and no such experience of an eternal, substantial aspect of self, one is, in essence, asserting that the propositions are not settled by the facts of experience, and therefore are not synthetic *a posteriori* propositions.

Assuming that an experimental methodology could be worked out for the exhaustive search of all aspects of self, there remains the dubious assumption that an eternal, substantial aspect of self could be experienced by the person who looks for it. How does one conclude that some aspect of experience is eternal without waiting until all the data are in, i.e. forever? One could turn to the Buddhist *abhiññā*, or higher knowledges acquired in the meditational state for corroboration; however since both the Hindu and Buddhist world-views hold that time stretches infinitely *forward* as well as backward, and none of the higher knowledges are of future occurrences, the problem remains.[10]

Could one assert that, after an unsuccessful search of selves in the past, the truth of PA can be *inferred*? Granting the possibility of such a search, it would have to be carried out in this or any number of lives and would therefore be a finite search, but how can one infer from the finite to the infinite in experience? Obviously, the experience from which we would infer would essentially be nothing compared to all experience that has been and is yet to be.

The only possible way that the facts might be checked to see if PA is true, then, is to claim the possibility of unqualified omniscience, that is, knowledge of all aspects of all selves stretching backwards and forwards in time infinitely.[11] Moreover, the facts in question could not just be potentially accessible, but must in fact *have been experienced*. We are forced to the same extreme solution when we assert that PĀ is true. Unless we can observe that some aspect has existed eternally backwards and forwards in time, there can be no truth assigned to PĀ. As before, no finite amount of experience will serve as a basis for an inference concerning the infinite or eternal. Once again, I take it that the person who denies the possibility of an experience of the infinite or eternal is simply affirming the non-empirical nature of both PA and PĀ. Therefore the inescapable conclusion seems to be that, when taken as synthetic *a posteriori* (empirical) propositions, both PA and PĀ will have indeterminate truth values unless we are able to attain unqualified omniscience.

In sum it has been argued in this section that, when considered as propositions, *Anatmavāda* and *Ātmavāda* are only verifiable insofar as we treat them as synthetic *a posteriori* propositions and only when we attain unqualified omniscience.[12] To recap, the argument proceeded along the following lines: (i) As propositions, the doctrines of *Anatmavāda* and *Ātmavāda* are the simple negations of each other, (ii) Whatever serves as a criterion for truth or the one must serve as a criterion for the other. (iii) Either both are analytic *a priori*, or both are synthetic *a priori*, or both are synthetic *a posteriori* (empirical). (iv) If we treat them as analytical *a priori* propositions, we are unable to determine their truth value. (v) If we treat them as synthetic *a priori* propositions, we are unable to determine their truth value. (vi) If we treat them as synthetic *a posteriori*

propositions, we are only able to determine their truth value if we attain unqualified omniscience.

Discussion of Implications

Some results of the preceding argument are of note. It would seem that the only non-contradictory Buddhist criticism of a propositional Hindu belief in *Atman* consists of the allegation that the Hindu does not check up on the truth of something that is, on the Buddhist account, within the range of experience. Thus if the Buddhist asserts that *Anatmavāda* is an empirical proposition, then so is *Atmavāda*. Likewise, if the Buddhist asserts that *Ātmavāda* is a metaphysical proposition that is only discoverable *a priori*, then the same must be true of *Anatmavāda*.

Moreover, I have argued that the only way to determine the truth values of *Anatmavāda* and *Ātmavāda* as propositions is to treat them as matters of experience, but that verification here is only to be had through unqualified omniscience. Whether to attribute unqualified omniscience to the Buddha is an open question, although many scholars are unwilling to do so on the basis of the Pāli Nikāyas.[13] There are, on the other hand, strong indications of support in the Upaniṣads for unqualified omniscience.[14] It is thus interesting to note that if one accepts the thesis of this paper, one would be forced to admit that the Hindu account of knowing seems far more conducive to finding out the truth of propositions concerning the existence of an eternal, substantial aspect of self *on the basis of experience* than the Buddhist account! Should we perhaps be considering a Hindu Empiricism Thesis?

The point of the preceding *reductio ad absurdum* must now be clear: when one treats these religious doctrines as identical to propositions, whether they are considered to be synthetic or analytic, or whether they are assumed to have truth value *a posteriori* or *a priori*, one is taking a philosophical position, the implications of which lead one far from established views. Empiricist positions on experience do not usually allow for the possibility of unqualified omniscience.[15] Thus one corollary to the argument presented in this paper is not that these doctrines are meaningless, but rather that it does not make much sense to insist that they can be reduced to propositions which are established analytically or synthetically.[16]

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NOTES

[1] JAYATILLEKE, K.N. (1998) *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), p. 39.
[2] *Ātmavāda* is something of a construction, here. Naturally, specific views will vary widely, and I make no pretense of reducing these views to one simplistic one while retaining all of the various aspects that have accured over time. Rather, I wish to consider the mainstream view of the doctrine as presented for example, by:

> Despite the great number of interesting topics dealt with in the Upanisads their central concern is undoubtedly the knowledge of, and path to, *ātman-brahman*. It is, however, impossible to synthesize all the statements of even the principal Upaniṣads and expound the *ātman-brahman* philosophy of the Upaniṣads; what can be done is to indicate certain main trends of thought. One of these very obvious tendencies is the attempt, made repeatedly in the Upaniṣads, to arrange the seemingly infinite plurality of things in a limited number of categories, coordinating macrocosm and microcosm, and to understand the manifold reality as a combination of relatively few primordial elements. By means of a progressive reduction, one can finally arrive

at the One, which is further reduced to an immaterial essence pervading everything without being identical with any one object. [KLOSTERMAIER, KLAUS K. (1994) *A Survey of Hinduism* (Albany, State University of New York Press), p. 204.]

Nikāya Buddhist *Anatmavāda* is only slightly less problematical, although the doctrine can be found throughout the Pāli Canon in roughly the same form -- for instance at *majjhima-nikāya* 1.233-234. The views presented in *Jayatillcke*, op. cit., note 1 pp. 38-39, and 370-374, KALUPAHANA, DAVID J. (1992) *A History of Buddhist Philosophy: Continuities and Discontinuities* (Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press), pp. 64-67, and HOFFMAN, FRANK J. (1987) *Rationality and Mind in Early Buddhism* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), pp. 51ff, are close enough to the formulation I give below to require no further elaboration.

[3] Quine (QUINE, W.V. (1980) The two dogmas of empiricism, in: *From a Logical Point of View*, 2nd rev. edn (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press), among others, has attacked the analytic/synthetic distinction; I address this problem in note below.

[4] One may be tempted to formulate a weaker version of PA thus: 'There is no evidence for the existence of an eternal, substantial aspect of self'. However, it is difficult to see how the Four Noble Truths – the very heart of Buddhism – and especially *nirvāṇa* (literally 'blowing out') as the *summum bonum*, could hang together with *Anatmavāda* interpreted as 'there is no evidence for ...' Such a formulation would still be consistent with 'there might possibly be an eternal, substantial ...', which should be anathema to the aforementioned doctrines. It therefore seems to me that the stronger version of the doctrine which I have given is the necessary underpinning of early Buddhist beliefs, when taken as a proposition. Moreover, HOFFMAN (op. cit. note 2) cites canonical evidence in *Majjhima-nikāya* I.136 in favour of the stronger version.

[5] The student of Asian philosophy might object that this trichotomy is the old 'either empirical, analytical, or meaningless' doctrine in disguise, implying an outlook which, when applied to Hindu or Buddhist thought, constitutes the sort of Orientalism one hopes to avoid. Let me first say that I am not here asserting the old Positivist mantra 'metaphysical implies meaningless'. Second, to head off further criticism, I am willing to allow that any experience might count *for some person* as empirical – such as a direct experience of reality or a supersensory perception of some sort (although see note 7, below). The basis of my thesis is that, on the grounds of consistency, however one treats PA, one must treat PĀ likewise – regardless of whether said treatment is experiential, rational, or metaphysical. If the critical student further insists that this reductionistic treatment still does not capture the essence of religious doctrines such as those which we are considering, then I am in full agreement, as is made clear in the Discussion of Implications section.

[6] JAYATILLEKE, op. cit., note 1, p. 34.

[7] KLOSTEMAIER, op. cit., note 2, p. 389.

[8] Pāli terms will be used in this section.

[9] As has been argued for instance by PULIGANDLA, RAMAKRISHNA (1986) *An Encounter with Awareness* (Wheaton, IL, Theosophical). He sees a permanent unchanging consciousness as the ground for all experience.

[10] The higher knowledges are listed by JAYATILLEKE op. cit., note 1, p. 438 as follows:

1. iddhividha-, i.e. psychokinesis (levitation, etc.).
2. dibbasotadhātu-, i.e. clairaudience.
3. cetopariyañāṇa-, i.e. telepathic knowledge.
4. pubbenivāsānussatiñāṇa-, i.e. retrocognitive knowledge.
5. dibbacakkhu, i.e. clairvoyance; also known as cutūpapāñāṇa, knowledge of the decease and survival of beings.
6. āsavakkhyañaṇa-, i.e. knowledge of the destruction of defiling impulses.

Although I have allowed, for the purposes of this argument, that supersensory experiences might count for some person as empirical, it has been argued elsewhere that these do not constitute empirical experience on the traditional read of 'empirical' – see HOFFMAN, FRANK J. (1982) The Buddhist empiricism thesis, *Religious Studies*, 18, pp. 151–158, ch. V of Hoffman (1987), op. cit., note 2, chs. 4 and 8 of KALANSURIYA, A.D.P. (1987) *A Philosophical Analysis of Buddhist Notions* (Delhi, Sri Satguru) and MONTALVO, DAVID (1999) The Buddhist empiricism thesis: an extensive critique, *Asian Philosophy*, 9, pp. 51–70.

In contrast, JAYATILLEKE (op. cit., note 1, ch. IX) argues for the empirical nature of the meditational experience, and KALUPAHANA (op. cit., note 2, ch.III) emphasises the Buddha's 'radically empiricist' treatment of the evidence gained thereby.

[11] It might be argued that 'eternal' should be interpreted 'timeless', rather than 'infinite in duration'. Yet it is not clear what an empirical experience of timelessness which could verify a substantial, eternal aspect of self would be like. I will grant the possibility of experiences in which one does not notice the passage of time, or experiences in which one might incorrectly gauge the passage of time, but experience without time seems beyond the empirical. Thus I admit that we often have experiences which we might call timeless, but I do not admit that we could necessarily infer thereby that these experiences were of eternal things.

[12] QUINE op. cit., note 3, argues that the difference between analytic and synthetic statements trades on the distinction between the meanings and the referents of the terms involved, and that any notion of analyticity depends vitally upon a notion of synonymy which is not conclusively worked out. Thus it is not statements which are analytic or synthetic, but collections of statements which adjust themselves in part or as a whole. Applied to the Hindu tradition, or to early Buddhist *dhamma*, this implies that, even in the face of (perhaps) contrary facts of experience, the doctrines might be maintained by an implicit or explicit adjustment of the meanings or referents of the terms. If we take this as the case (which it may well be), then it is hard to see how on any objective grounds one individual doctrine could be judged true and the other false, when both are taken as propositions. For those who ascribe to Quine's thesis, the argument of this paper should itself be adjusted to: 'When we treat Hindu *Ātmavāda* and the early Buddhist *Anatmavāda* as propositions, we are unable to objectively determine their truth value'.

[13] UPADHYAYA, KASHI-NATH (1971) *Early Buddhism and the Bhagavadgītā* (Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass), pp. 273–281 is willing to attribute a *potentially accessible* full recall of the past to the Buddha. On the other hand, Upadhyaya seems to think that the Buddha's knowledge of the as yet undetermined future is limited, citing *Digha-nikāya* III.134. He does note, however, that a passage from a later stratum of the Pāli Canon does seem to attribute future knowledge to the Buddha. Jayatilleke, op. cit., note 4, pp. 202–204) emphasises that the Buddha's omniscience was not of all things constantly and at once, citing *Majjhima-nikāya* 1.519. Contrast these with KALUPAHANA, op. cit., note 2 pp. 43–44), who asserts that texts such as the *Sutta-nipāta* 1122 seem to negate the very metaphysics which leads to the idea of omniscience. He argues that statements which have been rendered 'there is nothing which you have not seen, heard or cognized,' would be more accurately translated as 'you do not have (or recognize) something that is not seen, heard, conceived, or cognized in this world' – an alternate translation which certainly makes for a dramatic shift in meaning.

[14] UPADHYAYA, op. cit., note 13, pp. 280–281, cites *Bhagavadgītā* XIII.32 in asserting that 'man, with the realisation of his unity and identity with the all-inclusive and all-knowing Supreme, naturally becomes all-knowing and attains entire knowledge without residue'. Within the same passage Upadhyaya further states: 'It is thus clear that the B[hagavad] G[ītā] concept of omniscience unlike that of early Buddhism is without reservation'.

[15] KALUPAHANA, op. cit., note 3, at least, certainly seems to exclude it – see note 13, above.

[16] My thanks to Dr Frank Hoffman for critical remarks on an earlier draft of this paper.

THE EARLY BUDDHIST *SAMGHA*
IN ITS SOCIAL CONTEXTI[†]

Ian MABBETT

Some of the most vexed questions in the history of Buddhism concern the relation between the order and the many lay folk who in varying degrees identified themselves with its values and standards and gave regular support. Inevitably, Buddhism became a part of the lives of the laity upon which it depended. To many it has seemed natural to suppose that, by its nature, the *samgha* was designed to serve the needs of the laity.

A fundamental issue in the scholarship on the later rise of Mahāyāna concerns just this problem: did the outreach of the *bodhisattva* teaching to all people, lay as well as monk, actually recover the actively evangelical spirit of original Buddhism, as it claimed, or was it something new and alien to the originally esoteric spirit of the Buddha's message?

In this article, it will be accepted for the purpose of discussion that the original programme, as embodied in the intentions of the Buddha when he formulated his distinctive teachings, was essentially for those who dedicated themselves to a higher quest. In an important sense, the original ascetic message which can be identified in the canonical scriptures as the most likely content of the Buddha's own programme was indeed esoteric; only an elect of homeless wanderers, cutting themselves off from normal social bonds, could seriously hope to aspire to enlightenment and an end of suffering.[1] In this sense, then, the teaching in its earliest form excluded most people, and the

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1   This view is sustained by recent research not yet published: G. Bailey and I.W. Mabbett, *Early Buddhism and the Sociology of Religion.*

subsequent progressive involvement of Buddhism in social outreach, notably in Mahāyāna, was an importation

But this is only half the story. From the beginning, as soon as the Buddha attracted disciples, the Buddhist teaching had to find ways of accommodating itself to its social context. The meaning of the injunctions the Buddha was supposed to have declared was necessarily interpreted to accord with the assumptions of Buddhist communities at various later stages. This point, which ought not to appear controversial, is the springboard for the review of early Indian Buddhism in its social context which is offered here. Every religious teaching, no matter how abstract or universal its scope, is bound to respond to the social values and needs of the people among whom it gains a following. How did Buddhism reflect such values and needs in the first few centuries of its life, in pre-Mauryan and Mauryan India?

This period is not well served by useful historical sources. For the most part, it is necessary to use the canonical literature itself. Of course this literature cannot be uncritically read as a description of historical circumstances, and the attention so far given by historians to the social context of Buddhism has encountered problems of interpretation. The texts were subject to a process of selection and overhauling over a long period before any of them were written down; the picture of Buddhism which they present necessarily answered to the purposes of people living in later (much more urbanized) stages of culture.

It is necessary to recognize that, from the beginning, Buddhism was liable to change its character willy-nilly to the extent that it was successful and acquired a public role. As monks were drawn into the affairs of the royal court or the farming community, all parties to the interaction changed. There were pressures upon monks to turn into political agents, representing the interests of the state among villagers, or the interests of the village to state officials, and there were pressures upon the *samgha* as a whole to become more like brahmans in proportion as village and state gradually grew together.

The order of monks, the *samgha*, inevitably turned into something new as it succeeded, with a new role, or medley of roles, to play. This raises the question how centralized the order of monks was. The ultimately insoluble paradox was that a community constituted only by an idea could not indefinitely remain an unchanging and centralized community. The Buddha could say how he thought monks

should behave, but most of the time nearly all monks were scattered far and wide, free if they wished to ignore or modify what they had been told.

The story was told of the monk Subhadda who, after the Buddha's death, exclaimed with pleasure that now they could all behave as they pleased: 'Enough, sirs, Weep not, neither lament. We are well rid of the great *samana*. We used to be annoyed by being told: "This beseems you, this beseems you not." But now we shall be able to do whatever we like.'[2] His was a lone voice, but that it should be recorded must mean something. The *Dīgha Nikāya*'s account of the episode is found duplicated, in a slightly different format, in the Vinaya.[3] It may be questioned whether this incident, which fits awkwardly into its context, is a surviving fragment of genuine historical fact, reflecting the way in which some monks chafed under the Buddha's authoritarian discipline. But possibly the Buddha was not so much authoritarian as impatient with politicking. We cannot know. Another *sutta,* doubtless recorded for public relations purposes, emphasizes that what impressed outsiders about the *samgha* was its cheerfulness, unforced discipline, and sincere respect for the Buddha; these qualities are said to have appealed strongly to King Pasenadi.[4]

On the Buddha's death, the question was certainly urgent how the order should be held together. Famous is the saying attributed to the master that, far from lacking a teacher, the truths and rules of the order would stand as the teacher, and that if it wished the *samgha* could abolish all the lesser and minor precepts.[5] What this means is not clear; we may be sure that struggles went on behind the scenes, but the *sutta*s cannot be expected to describe them for us. The claim that the Buddha had willed that there should be no one Teacher in charge might represent a move by a group of monks objecting to the claims to inherited authority of a senior monk or monks. The equivocal references to Sāriputta's special status may mask a conflict of claims.[6]

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2   D.II.162.

3   See T.W. Rhys Davids, trans., *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Part II, London (P.T.S.) 1977, pp. 73-76 comparing D.II.162f. with Vin.II.284.5.

4   M. II.1.118-26, *Dhammacetiyasutta.*

5   D.II.154.

6   *Suttanipāta* 557 (*Sela Sutta* 10): Sāriputta is the 'heir bom', *anujāta*; cf. M. III.9f: Ānanda says that after the Buddha there is no designated leader, only the *dhamma*; cf M.III.29: Sāriputta is praised as the 'son'. That Ānanda should be made to declare the absence of a leader may represent

Subhaddha's alleged outburst did not represent what became the official line; the monks could not follow their own sweet will, but good order would be maintained by mutual consultation and study of the principles of the *dhamma*. This, rather than central control, would produce harmony.[7] The *samgha* decided not to take up the invitation to abolish lesser precepts since there was no clear way of distinguishing the lesser from the greater, and on various matters it was thought desirable to institute rules — for example, on eating, dress, housing and medicine — for the proper guidance of the monks. The Buddha is represented as prescribing some basic principles on these matters.[8] with the formulation of the Vinaya, of course, the codification of rules became very elaborate, but the ultimate sanction could only ever be expulsion from the order by agreement among a local group of monks, and there was no over-arching authority with disciplinary powers. The model of the *gana*, a republic or oligarchy whose government was subject to decisions made by assemblies, is often enough appealed to in Buddhist sources; the Buddha recommended the customs of the Vajjian *gana*,[9] and elsewhere he is said to have declared that on *uposatha* days the monks should be counted by 'the system employed in a *gana*,' *ganamaggena ganetum*, or by collecting tickets, *salākā*.[10]

This lack of centralization or hierarchy has remained a feature of the *samgha* organization to the present, except (and from the point of view of history and sociology it is an important exception) to the extent that in states with a high degree of civil control rulers superimposed a political hierarchy of state-sponsored public service functions staffed by monks upon the *samgha*; in the villages, however, the old traditions persist. Through the centuries, authority has worked through the line of teacher and disciple. At least in various Theravāda contexts, this authority has been subject to the *dhamma* and younger

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the outcome of a factional move against him. See also M.1.459, which appears to represent the Buddha sanctioning the leadership of Moggalāna and Sāriputta, but D.II.100, as already cited, has the Buddha telling Ananda that it does not occur to a Tathāgata to think that he will lead the order. Elsewhere, he is represented as telling Devadatta that he would not hand over the Order even to Sāriputta and Moggallāna - much less to such a one as Devadatta, 'a wretched one to be vomited like spittle': Vin.2.188.

7   D. III.127f.

8   D. III.130.

9   D. II.73-5.

10   Vin.I.117: 'Then it occurred to the monks: "Now, how should the monks be counted?" They told this matter to the Lord. He said: "I allow you, monks, on an Observance day to count by way of groups (*ganamaggena ganetum*) or to take (a count) by ticket (*salākam gahetum*)".'

monks could correct their seniors when necessary,[11] but respect for senior monks is enjoined, however,[12] and has been a natural part of the cultural values in Buddhist societies. Disputes are to be solved by elaborately detailed procedures including voting; but the status of respected experienced monks figures prominently in the methods of reaching a solution.[13] Local *samghas* have been described as modified gerontocracies.[14]

As time passed and the order grew, problems of harmony and discipline inevitably became acute. Rules and principles of conduct, as they came to be formulated by senior monks, could not automatically be enforced rigidly; they were therefore given as much weight as possible by being attributed to the mouth of the Buddha, and indeed in the Vinaya all rulings are expressly attributed to him. *Suttas* discuss the ways in which problems should be solved, favouring careful thought about the priorities of the *dhamma*; one passage refers to the impossibility of right-thinking people suffering schism or proclaiming another teacher.[15]

An important dimension to the change that took place after the Buddha's death was the fragmentation of the *samgha* into local communities as the monks' way of life became more sedentary. This process could have begun even during the lifetime of the founder. Hence, with the monkhood divided into many subdivisions each with its own base area and internal communications, it is unlikely that any one leader could have controlled the whole order. Horner suggested that senior monks like Sāriputta and Moggalāna were aspirants for leadership of particular local *samghas* rather than the entire *Samgha* of the Four Quarters.[16] This is a feature of Buddhism which probably needs to be recognized in the relationship between Aśoka and the *samgha* — the application of new rules, not to the whole, but to particular regional divisions.[17]

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[11]   This is stressed by M. Carrithers, *The Forest Monks of Srī Lankā: an anthropological and historical study*, Delhi (O.U.P.), 1983, pp. 247ff. The informal and quasi-egalitarian principles documented here are not duplicated in all Buddhist contexts outside Theravāda.

[12]   M.I.22.

[13]   Vin.2.93-104.

[14]   Carrithers, *Forest Monks*, p.251.

[15]   M.III.65; cf. MII.238-243 (*Kintisutta*).

[16]   I.B. Horner, trans., *The Collection of Middle Length Sayings (Majjhima-Nikāya)*, London (P.T.S.), Vol. III, 1977, pp. xxvii-xxviii.

[17]   See H. Bechert, 'The importance of Aśoka's so-called Schism Edict', in *Indological and Buddhist Studies. Volume in Honour of Professor J. W de Jong on his 60th Birthday*, ed. L.A.

The absence of strong central leadership contributed to the multiplication of rules designed to take its place. The Vinaya is full of legalistic provisions which can have had little meaning during the pioneering days of the Buddha's early wanderings, and there are signs even in the *Nikāyas* of regret at the incursion of more and more rules. An argument about the strict legalities affecting eating at night is said to have provoked the Buddha's impatience at 'higgling and haggling.'[18] As a lament in the *Majjhima Nikāya* has it, 'What is the cause, revered sir, what the reason why there were formerly fewer rules of training but more monks who were established in profound knowledge? And what is the cause, revered sir, what the reason, why there are now more rules of training but fewer monks who are established in profound knowledge?'[19] These words would strike a resonant chord in many institutions today, where the process described above as bureaucratization is setting in. It is easy to detect the operation of something like Parkinson's Law in the institutionalization that developed with the growth of coenobitic communities, and for that matter the growth of state control perhaps subtly exercised through patronage. Some things do not change much.

This, then, was the historical environment of the order. We can now turn to the question what social forces influenced its composition after the effective dominance of the Buddha's own preferences (whatever they may have been) had ceased to operate.

If the scriptural sources were historical records, they would offer quite good evidence that the appeal of the *dharma* was chiefly to well-off and well educated young householders, especially brahmans, with the leisure to seek spiritual goals instead of having to cleave to the routine of survival, for the individuals named as supporters and converts commonly answer this description. There is even a negative example given: a poor man with an ugly wife and little food to eat would like to wander forth as a mendicant, but cannot, beset as he is by the burden of his condition.[20] No doubt the Buddha, coming (it is normally supposed) from a cultured background, found it easy to speak to educated brahmans and people of leisure, and scholars have often supposed that, despite the egalitarianism which may in some

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Hercus, Canberra (The Australian National University), 1982, pp. 61-68.

[18] M.I.480.

[19] M.I.444f.

[20] M.I.450-52.

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sense be perceived in Buddhist doctrine, such people were the bulk of his converts. Oldenberg thought that, despite the Buddhist theory of equality, the practice of the *dhamma* reflected a different temper: 'A marked leaning to aristocracy seems to have lingered.'[21] Early Buddhist scholarship endorsed this interpretation. Fick considered that recruitment from the lower classes by the early Buddhists would not have been considerable; such cases are rarely mentioned in the texts.[22] Bouglé argued that, though the Buddhist teaching appeared egalitarian, in fact it was a message for intellectuals dealing in abstract ideas, and addressed to superior *ksatriya* groups rather than society as a whole.[23] Weber, referring to the wandering ascetics in general, said that the '*sramana* ... came predominantly from distinguished circles of lay culture recruited from the city-dwelling *ksatriya* patricians,' and suggested that Buddhism and Jainism reserved the status of full enlightenment to brahman and *ksatriya* recruits.[24]

More recent scholarship has similarly understood the early *samgha* to have catered for the aspirations of intellectuals.[25] Less radically, Sharma thought that though there is some unquantifiable evidence of recruitment to the order from low classes counting as *sūdras*, such recruitment must have been negligible.[26]

No doubt many of the earliest recruits may have been drawn from the ranks of those already following an ascetic career; of these, a substantial proportion may indeed have been brahmans. Tsuchida has emphasized the distinction between brahmans by birth who engaged in often lowly secular occupations and those who followed the ascetic path; he considers that the former were rarely converts taken on by the Buddha, the latter frequently.[27]

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[21] H. Oldenberg, *The Buddha: his life, his doctrine, his order*, London (Williams and Norgate), 1882, pp. 155-8.

[22] Richard Fick, *The Social Organisation in North-East India in Buddha's Time*, Delhi (Indological Book House), 1972, (first ed. 1897),.p. 51.

[23] C. Bouglé, 'Caste and the Buddhist Revolution', in *idem, Essays on the Caste System*, tr. D.F. Pocock, Cambridge (Cambridge U.P.), 1971, pp. 63-79 at p. 74.

[24] M. Weber, *The Religion of India*, trans. H. Gerth and D. Martindale, Glencoe, Ill. (Free Press), 1958/1962, pp. 226f.

[25] For example, T. Ling, 'Max Weber and Buddhism: the rustication of an urban doctrine', in *A Net Cast Wide*, ed. J.L. Lipner, Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Grevatt and Grevatt), 1986, pp. 34-53, and B.G. Gokhale, 'The Early Buddhist Elite', *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. 43 (1965), pp. 391-402.

[26] R.S. Sharna, *Sudras in Ancient India: a social history of the lower order down to A.D. 600*, Delhi (Motilal Banarsidass), 1958/1990, p. 152.

[27] Tsuchida, 'Two categories of brahmins in the early Buddhist period', *The Memoirs of the*

Certainly, we may suppose that the Buddha as acknowledged leader of a distinctive school might well have sought and found recruits among the free-lance wandering mendicants, sometimes of brahman birth, and that on occasion he successfully poached converts from other schools. But we must also recognize the testimony of frequent references to ordination of home-dwelling laymen.[28] Ascetics had to start their careers somewhere, usually following one teacher or another, and, to whatever extent the Buddha's school was successful at all, it was likely to become the locus of recruitment to mendicancy of increasing numbers. What sorts of people were these?

In the first place, it is altogether likely that the Buddha (and the senior teachers in the order in later generations) did indeed succeed in attracting into the order men (and women) from those social classes which could afford to spend time cultivating higher spiritual aspirations - especially brahmans. Wagle has studied the Pāli Canon and found evidence that 'even within the *saṃgha* a person retains his past group affiliation to some extent', on the evidence of apparent cases of brahman monks retaining their *gotta* affiliations; according to him, in practice even secular household brahmans could still get high social respect in the order.[29] However, it must be acknowledged that the texts are not historical records, and the references to conversions of brahmans and ascetics must be seen for what they are — a concern by later redactors to demonstrate to a critical audience that their master had been successful in impressing his superiority upon those classes which were the most dangerous potential opponents of his teaching. It is clear enough that the stories told in the *suttas* play fast and loose with a stock of floating anecdotes which are pressed into service for didactic purposes, and the line between fact and fiction is impossible to draw. Gombrich has pointed out the way in which a single brahman may appear in the canon in a number of different episodes which contradict each other.[30]

Toyo Bunko, Vol. 49 (1991), pp. 51ff.

[28]   On the conversion of lay supporters, see M. Wijayaratna, *Le moine bouddhiste selon les textes du theravāda*, Paris (Cerf), 1983, pp. 169f.

[29]   N. Wagle, 'Social groups and ranking: an aspect of ancient Indian social life derived from the Pali canonical texts,' *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol. 10 (1967), pp. 278-316 at pp. 310, 316.

[30]   R. Gombrich, 'Three souls, one, or none: the vagaries of a Pāli pericope', *Journal of the Pāli Text Society*, Vol. 11 (1987), pp. 73-78.

Stories of low-class recruitment to the *samgha* can be found, chiefly in the *Jātakas*,[31] but such stories are exercises of the imagination, besides belonging to a perhaps much later time, and for the present purpose they are of little historical weight. What needs to be brought into the discussion more than it has so far is, on the other hand, the evidence that early Buddhist teachers had to cope with substantial numbers of fellow-monks who did not form part of the stream headed for salvation at all but had much more modest purposes. The point is that, whatever the ideal may have been, many humble monks and nuns joined the order for the most mundane of reasons.

At several points occur lists of motives monks or nuns had for ordination. The *Majjhima Nikāya*, for example, gives at one point four motivations: age, illness, poverty and loss of relatives.[32] Elsewhere it is said that one should not turn to the Buddha for the sake of robes, or almsfood, or lodgings, or '*bhavābhava*' (an obscure category, taken by early commentators as referring to medicines).[33] Again, there is a suggestion that sometimes recruits joined the order at the instance of kings or thieves; on any interpretation, such people are likely to have been in trouble.[34] Some might enter the order from fear of persecution by kings or robbers, or to escape debt, or after losing family members or their means of livelihood.[35] In the *Pātimokkha* rules kings and thieves are cited as hindrances to the *uposatha*.[36] It is not fanciful to suppose that in its early days many recruits came from under the shadow of tax gatherers, press gangs or police. There are references to deserters joining the order. In the Vinaya, soldiers of King Bimbisāra are represented as deciding to join the *samgha* because their present profession engendered too much bad *karma*; on their disappearance, the generals and ministers raised the question which went straight to the heart of the matter: 'How can these recluses, sons of the Sākyans,

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[31]   For example, a potter: Jāt 3.375-383 (the *bodhisattva* is born in a potter's family).

[32]   M.II.66.

[33]   M.II.238; cf. I.B. Horner, trans., *The Collection of Middle Length Sayings (Majjhima-Nikāya)*, London (P.T.S.), Vol. III (1977), p. 25 n. 1.

[34]   M.I.463, and see I.B. Horner, trans., *The Collection of Middle Length Sayings (Majjhima-Nikāya)*, London (P.T.S.), Vol. II (1975), p. 136 n. 1: commentaries suggest that kings or thieves, apprehending victims, would give them the option of undergoing punishment or joining the order.

[35]   M.II.66; It 89 recommends those monks who are *not* 'led thereto by fear of rājahs, by fear of robbers, not because of debt, not from fear, not because of having lost a means of living', categories which would not be mentioned if they were empty.

[36]   J. Gangopadhyay, *Uposatha Ceremony*, Delhi (Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan), 1991, p. 35 ad n. 7.

let one who is in the king's service go forth (to become a monk)?[37] In the sequel, the king approached the Buddha, and the Buddha laid it down that people in the king's service should not be accepted as monks. Following passages imagine cases of criminals, debtors and slaves similarly entering the order, prompting the Buddha to declare in each case that such people should not be admitted.[38] Notably, though, King Bimbisāra is supposed to have had no objection to criminals entering the order: 'There is nothing to do against those who go forth among the recluses, sons of the Sākyans. Well preached in *dhamma*, let them fare the Brahma-faring for making an utter end of ill.'[39] Needless to say, little is to be inferred from all this about the actual historical background except that, by the time the Vinaya was codified, it was felt necessary to exclude various classes of undesirable recruit who would bring the monkhood into disrepute or cause political trouble.

Other recruits had equally mundane motives. In one case, monks were said to have taken ordination because they were ill and hoped to obtain the skilled doctoring of the physician Jīvaka.[40] Once the order took nuns, the many factors of social distress among women came into play: many are likely to nave become nuns to escape the 'misery of the mortar and pestle'.[41] Fear, homelessness and debt are also mentioned, suggesting that recruitment into the order could be a response to personal crisis of one sort or another. It was acknowledged that bad people might go forth as monks just for the sake of a living.[42]

There are various indications that the Vinaya represents in many ways a later stage of development than do the *Nikāyas*, whatever the relative chronology of their redaction. One of the clearest is the discrepancy between the free entry of all categories of recruits acknowledged in the *suttas* and the legalistic restrictions imposed by the rules of the order as they were subsequently codified. In the *Dīgha Nikāya*, King Ajātasattu is represented as saying that if a slave of his

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[37]   Vin.I.74.

[38]   Vin.I.74-6; at Vin.1.76 a debtor appealed to a ruling by King Bimbisāra that anyone should be free to become a monk, but the Buddha declared that a debtor should not be admitted.

[39]   Vin.I.74f.

[40]   Vin.1.72.

[41]   U. Chakravarti, *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism*, Delhi (O.U.P.), 1987, pp. 31-5, especially 34.

[42]   M.I.32.

left to become a monk, he would, if the occasion arose, treat the former slave with great honour;[43] as we have noticed, however, the Vinaya declares that slaves along with other classes of unqualified ordinands were not to be admitted.[44] These others included those suffering from severe chronic illnesses, criminals, soldiers, debtors, sons lacking their parents' consent, and minors under twenty years old.[45] In the meantime, no doubt, trouble had been caused by abuse of sanctuary when such people had taken robes as a form of refuge from the travails of life in society.

But legal exclusions of specific types of refugee could not exclude from the dignity of the monk's robe people who were suffering from no more than poverty or old age, and whose lot was so disagreeable that the austere but respectable life of a follower of the Buddha would be a change for the better. Here, culled from the major canonical sources, are some of the miscellaneous conditions mentioned in which people were believed sometimes to turn to the Buddha, apart from the quest for *nirvāṇa*: finding household life claustrophobic; destitution; idleness; exile or fear of retribution from the government or other agencies; sheer bad luck; debt; exile; loss of employment; the helplessness of old age; seeking to assuage the grief of bereavement; widowhood.[46] We can add the special case of avoiding or escaping marriage: in the *Therīgāthā*, we read of Isidāsī becoming a nun because of the unhappiness of marriage, and Sumedhā 'renouncing and going forth on her appointed wedding day.[47] These cases are mentioned here and there in the Pāli scriptures. Sources such as the *Thera-* and *Therī-gāthā* and commentaries indicate that converts as described were often young, often from wealthy families, and often had suffered bereavement, unhappy marriage, poverty, or banishment from home; significantly, though,

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[43] D.I.60f.

[44] Vinaya, I.76.

[45] The *Mahāvagga* deals in detail with rules governing ordination: Vin. I.56-95, with many grounds for exclusion mentioned; the minimum age for recruitment into the order as a novice was fifteen, and for the higher ordination twenty: Vin.I.49f.; cf. Vin.IV.130, Vin.I.85-90. The list includes children, lepers, people with boils, eczema, epilepsy, soldiers or officials not officially discharged, robbers, escapees, criminals, those punished corporally with traces remaining, slaves, those without parents' permission (Vin.I.83), those mutilated for punishment, people suffering from goitre or elephantiasis, the hunchbacked, the very ill, very ugly, one-eyed, crippled, maimed, paralysed, very old, blind, deaf or dumb; also (Vin.1.85-9): eunuchs, matricides, parricides, snake spirits, slayers of Arhants, hermaphrodites and schismatics.

[46] I.W. Mabbett, 'Buddhism and Freedom', in A. Reid and D. Kelly, eds, *Asian Freedoms*, Cambridge (Cambridge U.P.), 1998, pp. 19-36.

[47] *Therīgāthā*, 400-447, 448-522.

some were said to be of lowly birth, such as Sunīta the roadsweeper, who began his recitation: 'I was born in a humble family, poor, having little food; my work was lowly — I was a disposer of (withered) flowers.'[48] Sharma counted in the two texts just named at least ten out of 259 theras, and eight out of fifty-nine therīs, who were likely to count as śūdras by his criteria, including an actor, a trapper, a basketmaker, a caṇḍāla, a prostitute and a female slave.[49] A list of such cases has no census value; what counts is the fact that relief from the hardship of a life of menial toil is acknowledged along with more spiritual goals among the motivations of those entering the order, and acknowledged in many places. D.D. Kosambi lists named individuals attesting that disciples came from different varṇas, high and low.[50]

All this creates the presumption that, as indeed certainly happened in other better documented phases of the history of Buddhism, the Buddhist order, though not offering a life of comfort or self-indulgence, could provide a career of last resort for people in difficulties and without any pretensions to unusual holiness or scholarship.

It was necessary for the Buddha and his chief disciples, as it is necessary for us, to recognize in the motivations of the rank and file an intrusion of concrete historical circumstances upon an ideal. The ideal was the lonely path of the ascetic seeking an end to suffering in detachment and meditation; the historical circumstances were those created by public success. As an idea, Buddhism could be consistent and univocal; as a process in history, it had to be a number of different things to different people, and it could not be these things without stresses and strains.

So far we have been looking at the order from the inside; what is clear is that it cannot be conceptually isolated from its outside, for the people who entered it brought with them many of the concerns of the society beyond the cloister. In the early peripatetic days, there were no cloisters and there was constant interaction with the wider community; when there were cloisters, the interaction became if anything more important, because the monasteries acquired a variety of social roles

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[48] Theragāthā, 620-31; Cf. Wijayaratna, Le moine bouddhiste, pp. 19ff; p. 28.

[49] R.S. Shama, Sudras in Ancient India, p. 148.

[50] D.D. Kosambi, 'Early stages of the caste system in northern India', Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. 22 (1946), pp. 33-48 at pp. 33f.

and depended intimately upon the continuing support of a dedicated laity.

The close relationships that developed between the order and the committed laity upon which it depended deserve more study than they have so far received. The bonds which united the order and the local community in a sort of symbiosis required, not just that great men should from time to time bestow property upon the *samgha* as a whole, but that ordinary people in small communities should accept the responsibility of keeping the monks in their locality fed every day, and should make the maintenance of Buddhist vihāras their special business.

The monks could not, and obviously did not, treat their supporters with aloof disdain, having nothing to do with them except passively accepting their offerings in the prescribed spirit of detachment. On the contrary, they participated in an ongoing relationship. They regularly taught the *dhamma* to laymen, and inevitably the traffic between village and *vihāra* came to be institutionalized in a round of merit-making activities that provided satisfaction to all parties.

Buddhism, like other teachings on offer from holy men, was not an exclusive church, and laymen could seek spiritual benefit from the patronage of any number of different schools simultaneously. Nevertheless, there must have been many who attached themselves specially to the Buddhist *samgha* without any idea of ever taking the robe, and these people sought ways of sanctifying and confirming their special relationship. Various passages give evidence of lay involvement in the maintenance of the Buddhist order.[51] According to the *Majjhima Nikāya,* the participation of the lay followers was essential to the success of the order.[52]

Familiar in more recent times, of course, is the common practice of taking layman's vows and living a modified version of the ascetic life for prescribed periods, or indefinitely. There is, however, suggestive evidence of another way in which a layman could give

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[51] Mil.94f declares ten special qualities of a lay devotee: finding the same pleasures and pains as the monks, subjection to the *dhamma*, making gifts, preventing any decline in the *dhamma*, having right views, giving up traditional celebratory feasts, seeking no other teacher, working for peace, not being envious or hypocritical, and taking the three refuges of the Buddha, the *dharma* and the *samgha*. Cf. B.G. Gokhale, 'The Buddhist Social Ideals', *Indian Historical Quarterly,* Vol. 32 (1957), pp. 141-7.

[52] M.I.493f.

evidence of special commitment in ancient times. Some of Aśoka's inscriptions include a claim to have passed 256 nights; this has been seen as an institutionalized form of lay observance entailing attendance at the night-long *uposatha* vigil, fasting and listening to *dhamma* sermons, on days 8, 14 and 15 of the long fortnights, and 8 and 14 of the short - 67 in a year.[53] According to H. Falk, a reference in the so-called 'Schism' edict to a command given to officials means not, as conventional translations would have it, that these officials were 'dispatched', but that they were to supervise the conduct of these night-long vigils.[54] Falk also suggests that perhaps the total of 256 nights could have had special significance as a lay qualification.[55]

Being a lay supporter could carry very serious responsibilities. In proportion as the *saṃgha* flourished, the interaction between laity and monks increased. Did this interaction serve as a vehicle for deliberate involvement by the *saṃgha* in social problems? After all, the internal values of the order quite clearly reject the social categorizations and status discriminations embedded in the brahmanical orthodoxy; it might therefore be argued, and often has been, that in many ways Buddhism was an active proponent of social protest and reform.

Such a characterization certainly fails to apply to the ascetic programme which appears to have been central to the original message legible in the texts, for the Buddha was concerned to offer a way towards spiritual salvation for an elect class of ascetics who abandoned the distractions and responsibilities of the householder's life and sought an end to suffering in lonely contemplation, not a programme of social reform. Some scholars have seen in this aspect of Buddhist history an indication that the *dharma* was, if anything, the opposite of a movement of social protest; it was apt, rather, as a dampener upon disaffection: it taught that suffering is part of the fabric of life, that wrongs endured in this world are fruits of inevitable *karma*, and that therefore men should pin their hopes upon a future consummation in another world or in no world rather than complain about their present lot. 'It lifts no standard of revolt; it sounds rather

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[53] H. Falk, 'Die 246 Nachte Asokas', *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, Vol. 140/1 (1990), pp. 96-122.

[54] *Ibid.*, pp. 120f.

[55] *Ibid.* Falk points out that $256 = 4 \times 4 \times 4 \times 4$.

the signal for flight. Let us not talk of reconstructing the edifice of the divided classes, this would be to build clouds upon clouds.'[56]

This represents one understanding of the meaning of the Buddhist message. But it is, after all, only one Buddhism; others supervened early, and were easily superimposed upon the founder's first intentions, possibly during his lifetime and conceivably (though perhaps unlikely) even with his co-operation. The universal values implicit in the objectives of the *śramaṇas* could, in principle, lend themselves to reformist programmes, for they appeared to deny the validity of the old brahmanical orthodoxy. Truth was to be sought outside the institutionalized Vedic framework. Such a doctrine could no doubt inspire a social programme. Certainly, it can be argued that Buddhist ethical values — truth-speaking, keeping to the *dhamma*, liberality and non-violence — formed integral parts of the teaching constantly and quietly imparted to all lay supporters, and that such values had in the long term a tendency to work against social discrimination. B.G. Gokhale claims that the Buddha's objections to social discrimination were not just internal matters of monkish discipline but tended 'to create an equalitarian ethos which would cut across tribal lines and distinctions of caste and race.'[57] Thus the *saṃgha* became a social force and a custodian of ethical values.

In an immediately obvious sense, however, principles of social reform are inconsistent with the original programme of ascetic withdrawal. To whatever extent the *śramaṇa* movements became involved in society, they could have gone either way — favouring equality by denying the validity of privilege, or conserving inequality by denying the value of social action. What sort of influence did the order actually exert?

In the first place, an attitude of easy tolerance to people of varied backgrounds marked off the *śramaṇa* from the householder. The

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[56] Bouglé, 'Caste and the Buddhist Revolution', in idem, *Essays on the Caste System*, tr. D.F. Pocock, Cambridge (Cambridge U.P.), 1971, pp. 63-79 at p. 74; Bouglé also (*Ibid.* p.78) quotes Pillon, in the *Année Philosophique*, 1868: 'Thus the conscience becomes the accomplice of all natural and social fatalities; it will no longer object to anything, will not protest against anything, will not revolt against anything.' See also R. Thapar, *From Lineage to State: Social Formations in the Mid-First Millennium B.C. in the Ganga Valley*, Bombay (O.U.P.), 1984, p. 150.

[57] B.G. Gokhale, 'The Buddhist Social Ideals', *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 32 (1957), pp. 141-7 at p. 146. He cites Dhp verses 84, 129, 142, 223, 256, 257 for these social values. The verses cited laud selflessness, non-injury, serenity and calmness, generosity, and the wise and discriminating judgment of cases. Some of these qualities are specifically attributed to good ascetics, brahmans or rulers. By themselves, they do not look like a programme for social reform. (On this point, see also M.II. 128. M.II.147-157.)

wandering ascetics or *sramanas* moved among all classes of people and accepted recruits from any of them. All people were alike in the Buddha's eyes too. In some passages he is represented as distinguishing between physical and moral or psychological criteria of real status: an outcast or a brahman is made such not by birth but by behaviour; 'name' and 'family' are just empty words.[58] In the *samgha*, there is no distinction of wealth, and respect is given to all;[59] ultimately there is no question of birth or lineage.[60] Within the *samgha*, there must be no insulting speech referring to monks' former natal status, occupation or condition.[61] The inclusion of such a rule in the Vinaya is telling; it reminds us that monks, being fallible humans, could not easily forget the distinctions of social status current in the outside world which they had left, and needed to be restrained from importing them.

Here then is a clear doctrine of personal worth according to individual merit, not inherited social position. The Buddha appears in the texts consorting with mendicants of all types, including people of low class and dark skin, for which he was criticized by the orthodox.[62]

The claims of the brahmans to social eminence are roundly criticized. Their pretensions are analysed by the Buddha and dismissed. All people are alike in potential, with good and bad qualities among those born in all classes; so far as purity of birth goes, brahmans are in no position to give themselves airs, for they cannot be sure, who they are.[63] (This casts interesting light upon the transmission of social status, suggesting that people of brahman stock often took wives from families without claims to good Aryan descent.)

It is important, though, to recognize that this absence of social discrimination belonged originally in the context of a programme for

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58   *Suttanipāta, Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. X, p. (23) 135/141; cf. pp. 462, 620-650.

59   A4.210; see *P.E.D.* s.v. *appativibhatta* '(not eating) without sharing with others'.

60   In respect of wisdom and righteousness there is no question of birth or clan, *jāti* or *gotta*: D.III.99: *Na kho Ambattha anuttarāya vijjā-carana-sampadāya jāti-vādo vā vuccati, gotta-vādo vā vuccati....*

61   Vim.IV.4-1 1: all forms of jeering and scoffing are condemned, especially jeering at monks on the score of their birth (*jāti*), occupation (*sippa*) or condition (*kamma*).

62   D.III.81.

63   M.II.147-157; cf. D.I.92f.: the Buddha was of pure descent, but there were brahmans whose ancestry included anonymous slave-girls.

personal spiritual discipline, not of social reform or political management. Where the Buddha is represented as teaching non-discrimination, the concern is with the equality of all truth-seekers at the same stage on the road to enlightenment, regardless of their origins, not with the merits of social distinctions in the world outside the *samgha*.[64] There is no evidence to suggest that the Buddha sought to work for the abolition of hierarchical social relationships; indeed, it has been argued that, in finding a basis for an individual's status in past *karma* rather than birth, he was legitimizing rather than discrediting social differentiation.[65]

One important area of social action and ethical values that is a pressing topic of modern concern is that of attitudes to women. Buddhism has already been examined by a number of scholars from this point of view. Pāli sources have been thoroughly examined, and there is no need here to repeat at length what has already been said elsewhere. The evidence can be used to argue that Buddhism either gave women an improved status or denied it to them. Some earlier writers emphasized the increment in equality, status and respect enjoyed by women in the early Buddhist system.[66] Diana Paul found some particularly misogynistic attitudes in Theravāda, but by comparison found Mahāyāna overall quite favourable to women.[67] Liz Wilson sees as pervasive throughout a male-centred vision which focuses upon women's bodies as objects only of distaste suitable for meditation upon the theme of transience.[68]

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[64] M.II.147-157 (*Assalāyanasutta*): brahmans are like other people by birth; cf. M.II. 1 28. The Buddha here obliquely teaches non-discrimination; he seems concerned to specify that this non-discrimination is only in respect of the ascetic career, not social status.

[65] See Y. Krishan, 'Buddhism and the Caste System', *J.I.A.B.S.*, Vol.9, No. 1 (1986), pp. 71-83, especially p.82: the Buddha's teaching affirmed, not weakened, the *varna* system, finding a new basis for it in *karma*, rather than in Vedic myths (X.90), while providing for non-discrimination within the *samgha*.

[66] See Caroline A. Foley (C.A.F. Rhys-Davids), 'The women leaders of the Buddhist reformation as illustrated by Dhammapāla's commentary on the *Therīgāthā*', *Transactions of the Ninth International Congress of Orientalists*, Vol. 1, Indian and Aryan Sections, ed. E. Delmar, London (Committee of the Congress), 1893, pp. 344-61; I.B. Horner, *Women under Primitive Buddhism: Lay Women and Alms Women*, New York (E.P. Dutton), 1930/Delhi (Motilal Banarsidass), 1975. The latter work is based on a study of the Pāli canon (especially the Vinaya, and within this especially the Cullavagga and the Bhikkhunī-Khandaka), the commentaries, the *jātakas*, and the *Milindapañha*.

[67] Diana Paul, *Women in Buddhism: images of the feminine in the Mahayana Tradition*, Berkeley (Asian Humanities Press), 1979; 2nd ed. Berkeley & Los Angeles (U. of California P.), 1985. See pp. 6, 303. The author found that the texts most favourable to women tended to be the most popular.

[68] Liz Wilson, *Charming Cadavers. Horrific figurations of the feminine in Indian Buddhist Hagiographic Literature*, Chicago/London (University of Chicago Press), 1996. On women in

Familiar is the evidence that the early Buddhists evinced a greater tolerance than brahmanical codes imply. The Buddha's followers and patrons included women: he was visited at Vesāli by the wealthy courtesan Ambapālī.[69] The *Therīgāthā* must be used with caution here, for it represents a later stage of Buddhist history, but for what it is worth, of sixty nuns figuring in this text whose background is described, five are low-born, as noted above.[70] (This is suggestive, for the sample represented by the individuals figuring in this collection is likely to be weighted towards the better educated.) Nevertheless it is clear enough that, if one takes late twentieth century values as standard, the Buddha (unsurprisingly, perhaps) fails to earn a high score. There is, of course, the story that the Buddha was reluctant to admit women to the order, and predicted that its life would be shortened by this move, which he approved nevertheless.[71] As K.T.S. Sarao has said, 'Nowhere do we see Gautama making favourable comments on women's property rights, choice of husband, female education or against their being ill-treated.'[72] The same author points to the Vinaya rule that nuns must pay respects to monks, however junior,[73] collects references from various sources, especially *Jātakas*, suggesting disdainful attitudes to women, and concludes that 'Early Buddhism sees women as destructive, elusive, mysterious, treacherous, sensual and not much higher than animals.'[74]

Buddhism see also Rita M. Gross, *Buddhism after Patriarchy: a feminist history, analysis, and reconstruction of Buddhism*, Albany (S.U.N.Y. Press), 1993 (offering an 'androgynous' interpretation of the Buddhadharma); Jonathan Walters, 'A voice from the silence: the Buddha's mother's story', *History of Religions*, Vol. 33 (1994), pp. 358-79 (who argues that, for a substantial period after Aśoka, women in Buddhism were influential and relatively little disadvantaged); J.I. Cabezón, ed., *Buddhism, Sexuality, and Gender*, Albany (S.U.N.Y. Press), 1992 (see particularly A. Sponberg, 'Attitudes toward women and the feminine in early Buddhism', pp. 3-36, emphasizing the 'multivocality' of a Buddhism that contained a variety of interests and attitudes).

[69] D.II.95.

[70] See T.W. Rhys Davids, trans., *Dialogues of the Buddha*, London (P.T.S.), Vol. I (reprint, 1973), p. 102.

[71] Vin.2.254: the Buddha acknowledged that women were as well able as men to realize the states producing enlightenment; Vin.2.256: the Buddha said that having women entering the houseless state would result in the *dhamma* lasting for five hundred years instead of a thousand. I.B. Horner (*Women*, p. 103) saw this latter passage as a possible interpolation: 'Monks edited the sayings attributed to Gotama, and they would naturally try to minimise the importance which he gave to women'.

[72] K.T.S. Sarao, 'Early Buddhist Attitudes towards Women', *Z.D.M.G. Supplementa 9. Proceedings of the Thirty-Second International Congress for Asian and North African Studies*, Stuttgart (Steiner), 1992, pp. 150-152.

[73] *Ibid.* p. 151.

[74] *Ibid.* p. 152.

For the purpose of understanding the dynamics of Buddhism's interaction with lay society, however, later twentieth-century standards and concerns are likely to be of limited value. One thing that inevitably strikes the reader of the Pāli canon is that, among the references to women that figure there, an enormous proportion is concerned to teach the monks about the dangers of sexual temptation which must be avoided. From the point of view of the original *samgha*, involvement with women was fraught with danger, for long-suppressed sexual feelings were more likely than anything else to threaten a monk's loyalty to the values of his ascetic calling.

Thus, in the *Majjhima Nikāya*, a monk who is claimed never to have observed the characteristics of women, to have taught *Dhamma* to nuns or any other women, or approached nuns' quarters, is held up as a role model.[75] The foulness of women's bodies is repeatedly emphasized: the corpses of women are 'full of worms, ... diseased, impure, rotten, oozing, trickling, the delight of fools'.[76] An alluring female body prinked out with cosmetics and adornments will delude a fool, but not the one who seeks transcendence.[77] Elsewhere, in the *Theragāthā* it is apostrophized as a chain of bones, evil-smelling:

> You little hut made of a chain of bones, sewn together with mesh and sinew.
> Fie upon the evil-smelling body. You cherish those who have another's limbs.
> You bag of dung, tied up with skin, you demoness with lumps on your breast.
> There are nine streams in your body which flow all the time.
> Your body with its nine streams makes an evil smell and is obstructed by dung.
> A bhikkhu desiring purity avoids it as one avoids excrement.
> If any person knew you as I know you, he would avoid you, keeping far away, as one avoids a cesspit in the rainy season.[78]

Monks are repeatedly warned about contact with women: the sight of a scantily clad woman may overwhelm a monk with lust and he may return to lay life, which is why another name for women is

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[75]   M.3.126; cf. Vin.4.21., where the rule is made that a monk should not teach the *dhamma* to women.

[76]   Thag.393f.; cf. Thag. 315f.

[77]   M.2.64f.; cf. Thag.769-774.

[78]   Thag.1150-1153.

'the peril of fierce fishes.'[79] Women are naturally prone to misconduct;[80] the approach of a dancing girl or of a prostitute is a 'snare of death'.[81] Concentration on one's routine as a monk may be wrecked by 'nicely adorned women' coming to look round the monastery.[82] Sages (*muni*) sleep peacefully only if they have no bonds with women.[83] In all sorts of ways, women are dangers to see, to talk about, to think about; they are captivating and alluring to men.[84] When King Prasenajit of Kośala rides out in the park, he has with him his favourite lovely wives, and

> the fragrance of their bodies is so sweet. It is just as if a casket of scent were opened - these royal ladies are so sweetly scented. Lord, the touch of those ladies is as a tuft of cotton-wool, so delicately are they nurtured. Well, lord, at such time we have to ward the elephant, and we have to ward ourselves as well.[85]

A monk should be careful not to go into a village for alms at a time when he may catch sight of the wrong things, such as women with dishevelled clothing.[86] A woman should be thought of in the same way as a mother, sister or daughter.[87] But, despite all warnings, there could be ascetics so misguided as to think that

> there was no fault in sense-pleasures and that happiness lies in the young, soft and downy arms of a girl-wanderer.[88]

What is shown by such passages is that the content of the canon must be understood primarily in the light of the lessons it held for monks, who in the first instance, in the oldest texts and many later ones, were supposed to be dedicated to an ascetic peripatetic way of life. Whatever may have happened to the *dhamma* as it became an

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[79]   M.1.462.

[80]   Dhp.242.

[81]   Thag.459-463, 267f; cf. Thag 769ff. A monk saw the approach of his own wife, comely and well dressed, as a snare of death: Thag.299f.

[82]   S1.185.

[83]   Thag.137.

[84]   S 5.319; Thag736-739; Dhp284; Thig77; A 1.1; S 4.238.

[85]   S 5.351.

[86]   Sn 386f; cf. Mvu 3.328.

[87]   S4.110.

[88]   M1.305.

influential force in lay society, it is not immediately apparent from the content of the texts that it was in origin conceived of as a social programme, and references to women should not be seen as social doctrines. They merely pick up the assumptions current in Indian society at the time, adding to them the unease and distrust felt by monks professionally required to see women as dangerous.

Thus women are supposed to be obsessed with having numerous children,[89] they are prone to be dragged down into hell by the bad *karma* of their selfishness, their jealousy and their lust for sense-pleasure;[90] they cannot obtain enlightenment because they have a limited 'two-finger' intelligence.[91] They are expected to find their fulfilment in the devout observance of their family roles; one passage identifies as causes of bad rebirth for women an absence of faith, of a sense of shame, and of a fear of reproach, when these are conjoined to anger, grumbling, envy, selfishness, adultery, immorality, and indolence.[92] Perhaps it is for such reasons that nuns had to observe many more rules than monks.

Texts acknowledge that the lot of a woman is not a happy one: she must endure separation from her family to go to that of her husband, menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, and subservience to a man.[93] A verse in the *Therīgāthā* says that some women commit suicide after childbirth.[94] Constant humble subservience to her husband and his family is clearly expected.[95] She had to wait like a servant upon her husband:

Arising in good time I approached my lord's house; having washed my hands and feet, upon the threshold I approached my husband with the *añjali* salute.
Taking a comb, decorations, collyrium and a mirror, I myself adorned my lord, like a servant-girl.

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89 Ud 91;A 1.78.

90 S4.240.

91 S 1.129 = Thag 60; the various commentaries explain this by reference to the way women need to judge whether rice is cooked by pressing it with two fingers, or the way they take cotton fibre with two fingers and spin the thread: cf. A 1.28, M 3.65f. (Note by Peter Masefield).

92 S4.240.

93 S4.239.

94 Thig 216f.

95 S 16; M 1.253. The age of sixteen appears to have been regarded as normal and desirable; see Thig 445f.

I myself prepared the rice-gruel; I myself washed the bowl; as a mother her only son, so I looked after my husband.

My husband offended against me, who in this way had shown him devotion, an affectionate servant, with humbled pride, an early riser, not lazy, virtuous.[96]

Sometimes good things are said about the female sex, but they are equivocal: a husband disappointed that his wife has given birth to a girl is consoled with the assurance that a woman can be better than a man because if she is clever and virtuous she might give birth to a 'valiant emperor';[97] woman is described as the 'utmost commodity', perhaps because (as the commentary puts it) 'all *bodhisattvas* and *cakkavattis* come into being in none other than their mothers' womb'.[98] A really good woman might be reborn (like a man) in one of the divine realms of the gods, but only in those belonging to the *kāmaloka,* the plane of desire, which is subordinate to the planes of pure form and formlessness.[99]

A review of early Buddhist treatment of women, then, reminds us, unsurprisingly, that in matters of custom and tradition the Buddhist norms did not step outside the framework of constraints and presuppositions that had evolved in contemporary society. What they could do, however, was to endorse whatever features of current values were the most consonant with spiritual insight. In practice, this meant the promotion of peaceful and respectful relationships between individuals and groups. The concept of merit, *puṇya,*[100] as a bond between monks and laity, and as a device by which ordinary people could benefit spiritually from the presence of monks in their midst, was a potential eirenic influence upon social relationships which developed early. The original soteriological quest may have offered no place for lay activity within the scheme of life leading to salvation, but the Buddhist doctrine of *karma* could easily be interpreted so as to provide such a link. Unlike the Jain idea of *karma,* which made of it a sort of personal spiritual hygiene unable to legitimize any social

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96   Thig 406ff.

97   S 1.86.

98   S 1.43.

99   A 1.213f.

100   Mayrhofer, *Etymological Dictionary,* cites the derivation from the root pr, 'fill', but suggests the possibility of another root pṛ related to nipuṇa 'clever', or a possible *pṛṇya, 'förderlich'.

activity, the psychological Buddhist version of it gave it a fundamental role in a system of ethics; the progression through liberality (giving offerings to monks), good conduct (following the precepts of the *dhamma*) and spiritual cultivation associated lay supporters with the order and met a social need.[101] In its public face, Buddhist morality was a force for stability and order, embodied in precepts encouraging people to carry out their responsibilities assiduously:

> Great learning and skill, well-learnt discipline, and well-spoken words, this is the highest blessing.
> Waiting on mother and father, protecting child and wife, and a quiet calling (*anākulā ca kammantā*), this is the highest blessing.
> Giving alms, living religiously (*dhammacariyā*), protecting relatives, blameless deeds ...
> Ceasing and abstaining from sin, refraining from intoxicating drink, perseverance in the *Dhammas* ...
> Reverence and humility, contentment and gratitude, the hearing of the *Dhamma* at due seasons ...
> Patience and pleasant speech, intercourse with *Samanas*, religious conversation at due seasons ... [102]

Eventually, certainly in the stable institutions of rural Buddhism familiar in more recent times, monk and layman alike could be drawn into a single integrated scheme, within which the principle of merit may show Hindu influence.[103] It has been debated how far the *dhamma* taught by Aśoka in his inscriptions was intended to correspond specifically with the Buddhist teaching; the very ambiguity is significant, for Aśoka's *dhamma* focuses not upon *nibbāna* (which is not even mentioned) but upon harmonious and orderly social relationships, in which respect and reverence are always to be rendered to social superiors.

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[101] R. Gombrich, 'Karma and social control', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 17 No. 2 (1975), pp. 212-220.

[102] Sn.261-266 (p. 47). Probably the most commonly cited homily on social virtues on these lines is the Sigālovāda Suttanta, D.3.180-193 (redefining the cult of the six quarters as a metaphor for the practice of social virtues); cf. A3.37-8 (wives should work hard at running the household for the benefit of their husbands).

[103] H. Saddhatissa, *Buddhist Ethics*, London, 1970, traces the evolution of moral ideas in the Vedic literature, leading to a rudimentary notion of karma and rebirth based on merit; see especially pp. 121f. Cf. R. Gombrich, 'Notes on the brahminical background to Buddhist ethics', *Buddhist Studies in Honour of Hammalaya Saddhatissa*, ed. Gatare Dhammapala et al., Nugegoda, Sri Lanka (University of Sri Jayewardenepura), 1984, pp. 91-102 at p. 91.

If we wish to picture the relationships of the early Buddhist order with encompassing lay society, no simple generalization is likely to be adequate. The *samgha* was not always working purposefully to subvert the social order; nor was it regularly engaged in supporting the existing socio-political structure in the kingdoms where it was generously patronized. Its members played a variety of parts, as wandering ascetics, shamans (in a broad sense), scholars and (above all, in some circumstances) mediators between metropolitan and local culture and community. As they travelled, monks could enter into different relationships in different contexts.

In particular, to add a final touch of depth and realism to our picture of the order in its social context, we should notice that they were not necessarily always revered and respected wherever they went. Far from it. Fundamental to the complex array of different Buddhisms at work in society is the ambivalence of the monk's image.

It is often overlooked that there were, as indeed there still are, stresses and strains at times in the relations between monks and laymen. Not all monks were well fitted to play the dignified, aloof role demanded by their station; further, many of those who were so fitted had ideas about the way they should teach the *dhamma* to laymen that did not meet with a happy reception.

It is not as if all sects of wandering ascetics were respected and supported. We have evidence that other *sramana* sects besides the Buddhists could earn distrust or contempt. The Ājīvikas, for example, were seen as weird, goblin-like creatures, and their opponents claimed that, though strict in public, they were self-indulgent in private, behaving without chastity or frugality.[104]

'Those unrighteous people the Ājīvas, as ordained by the gods, are the confusers of *varna* and *āśrama*, a people of workmen and craftsmen. Goblins are the divinities in their sacrifices, which they perform with wealth (stolen) from beings who resemble the immortals (i.e. brahmans) and (gained by acting as) police spies, and with much other ill-gotten wealth ...'[105]

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[104] A.L. Basham, *History and Doctrines of the Ājīvikas: a vanished Indian religion*, Delhi (Motilal Banarsidass), 1981 (reprint) pp. 162, 278.

[105] *Vāyu Śrīkṣetraurāṇa* 69. This follows the translation by A.L. Basham, *History and Doctrines*, p. 162.

Among the more extreme of the ascetics, there were always those who deliberately mortified themselves by making themselves disgusting to mainstream society; mediaeval *samnyāsa* texts, even, advise the renunciant to be indifferent to honour and insults alike; 'Let a yogin act in such a manner that people will despise him and never associate with him;'[106] dishonour is to be deliberately courted in various ways; recommended lifestyles include behaving exactly like a madman, or like a cow.[107]

The Buddha's followers were always likely to be tarred with the same brush as other ascetics who disdained the ways of ordinary people and seemed to insist upon perversity in their profession and practice. The Buddhist texts do not dwell on these aspects, but at various points they allow us to see that bhikkhus were not always given respect by the community. There were ugly rumours about the order; it was claimed by some that followers of the Buddha had killed a woman in the Jeta Grove, and the Pāli scriptures allude at several points to tension between householders and monks; in one passage in the *Dīgha Nikāya* the Buddha advises his followers how to respond to hostile criticism of the Buddha, the doctrine or the order, and in another passage in the *Udāna* is told an unsavoury story of trouble stirred up by jealous ascetics of other schools who killed a woman and sought to pin the blame for the murder upon the Buddha and his followers. It is difficult to know what historical basis may underlie such a story, but clearly it reflects an environment of rumour-mongering and slander.[108]

It is clear that the followers of the Buddha were often enough regarded as bad elements,[109] and sometimes they were abused and mistreated. It was recognized that if they went to Mathura or the borderlands they should not expect to get on well there.[110]

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[106] P. Olivelle, *Samnyasa Upanisads: Hindu Scriptures on Asceticism and Renunciation*, N.Y. (O.U.P.), 1992, pp.107f.

[107] Olivelle, *Samnyasa Upanisads*, pp.108f; see especially p. 108 n.10. It is worth recalling that the Raghuvamsa has an episode in which the hero must behave like a cow to expiate an offence. See also Tatia, 'The Interaction of Jainism and Buddhism and its Impact on the History of Buddhist Monasticism', in *Studies in the History of Buddhism*, ed. A.K. Narain, New Delhi (B.R. Publishing), 1979, pp. 321-338 at p. 322.

[108] D.I.2f; Ud. 43f. See also P. Masefield, 'The Muni and the Moonies' p. 145.

[109] This aspect of the *samgha*'s relationship with society is discussed by Peter Masefield, 'The Muni and the Moonies.'

[110] A 3.256 (the disagreeableness of Mathura); A 4.225f. (in the outlying countries there are unintelligent barbarians; the Buddha's followers cannot get on there). At D.III.264 is a reference to rebirth in border countries, among unintelligent barbarians, where the *dhamma* cannot prosper.

The Buddha and his followers were liable to various forms of harassment.[111] The *suttas* at several points represent brahmans speaking to the Buddha contemptuously, treating him or his followers with lofty disdain or abrasive scorn.[112] For example a brahman who has been impressed by the Buddha rejects his former attitude to 'little shaveling recluses, black, offscourings of our kinsman's heels' (a stock phrase appearing in many places).[113] An Ājīvika taunted the Buddha, or one of his lay supporters, as a 'shaven householder' (*mundagahapatika*).[114] In another story is a reference to villagers having been induced by Māra the evil tempter to harass and despise monks.[115] Such allusions would not be made if contemptuous treatment of Buddhist monks did not seem plausible. Vinaya rules are sometimes introduced by stories of monks misbehaving in ways that required a judgment by the Buddha, and such misbehaviour is occasionally said to have earned the order a bad reputation;[116] such stories are unlikely to record historical episodes but reflect a probably well grounded concern that irregular behaviour on the part of monks was all too likely to bring the order into disrepute.

As the story of Saṅgāmaji suggests,[117] the Buddha and his order were likely to fall foul of the relatives of new ordinands, whose families may sometimes have had their lives seriously disrupted by the loss of their kinsfolk being recruited into the monkhood.[118] In the Vinaya there is a reference to people in Magadha being angry at the Buddha for his teaching which caused the breaking up of families; the Buddha is blamed for depriving people of children, making widows,

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[111] B.G. Gokhale cites a number of these: see his 'Early Buddhism and the brahmins', in *Studies in the History of Buddhism*, pp. 68-80 at p. 72 n. 28.

[112] D.I.90; M.I.334, S4.117, D.I.103. In this last, for example, a brahman teacher scoffs at the idea of base mendicants such as the Buddha having any traffic with brahmans. See also F.L. Woodward, trans., *The Book of the Kindred Sayings*, Vol. 4 (Pāli Text Society), 1927, p. 74 n. 1: non-brahmans such as the Buddhist monks were assimilated to *śūdras* in their relatively dark complexion and their origin (in the well-known creation myth) from Brahmā's foot.

[113] M.II.177: this is something of a stock phrase attributed to brahmans; cf. M.I.334.

[114] Vin.IV.91.

[115] M.I.334.

[116] E.g. Vin.1.191.

[117] *Udāna* 8.

[118] Bareau has analysed the evidence bearing on the attitudes of ordinands' families to *saṃgha* recruitment. A. Bareau, 'Réactions des familles dont un membre devient moine selon le canon bouddhique pali', in O.H. de Wijesekera, ed., *Malalasekera Commemoration Volume*, Colombo (The Malalasekera Commemoration Volume Editorial Committee), 1976, pp. 15-22.

and destroying families.[119] Suddhodana is represented in one passage as remonstrating against the Buddha for making so many members of his family take ordination; this episode is represented as the occasion for the introduction of the rule that ordinands must have their parents' permission.[120] Another Vinaya passage tells of a monk living with a woman, and then leaving her, to her fury;[121] this occurs as part of a series dealing with monks committing sexual misdemeanours; nothing can be inferred from them except that, by a certain stage in the history of the order, it was thought worth-while to hold up bad examples of such behaviour.

Buddhism might have had to endure the worst of both worlds in that, while as a *sramana* movement it could be blamed for the character earned by extreme ascetics practising repellent penances, its deliberate moderation and avoidance of the severer forms of self mortification could earn distrust. A passage in the *Majjhima Nikāya* refers to other sects being ignorantly treated as superior, Buddhism as inferior, by a householder.[122] Other sects could look down on Buddhists as spurious ascetics. Ājīvikas called Buddhist monks jeeringly 'shaven-headed householders', and a group of them mocked a group of bhikkhus who were carrying parasols, saying that they looked like treasury officials, *ganakāmahāmatta*.[123] Some of the stories in the *Thera-* and *Therī-gāthās* suggest that Buddhist monks could be regarded as idlers, living on charity and fond of taking their ease.[124] Certainly it was important to the leaders of the order to keep up the standards of deportment of less experienced followers; one *sutta* emphasizes the need for a forest monk living on his own to avoid any display of uncouthness, laziness or ignorance of *dhamma* in public.[125] The Buddha was sometimes on the defensive; after declaring the rebirth states of deceased disciples, he had to explain that this was done not for the sake of his reputation but wholly for the

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[119] Ud. 5f.; Vin.1.43 (cited above).

[120] Vin.I.82f.

[121] Vin.III.131f.

[122] M.I.376f.

[123] Vin.2.130.

[124] Thag 219, 342, 705; Thīg. 88, 237, 273, and see B.G. Gokhale, 'The image-world of the Thera-Therī-Gāthās', in O.H. de Wijesekera, ed., *Malalasekera Commemoration Volume*, Colombo (The Malalasekera Commemoration Volume Editorial Committee), 1976, pp. 96-110.

[125] M.I.469-73 (*Gulissānisutta*).

sake of the *dhamma*.[126] No doubt criticisms of such practices had been received.

In the following centuries, too, it appears that Buddhist monks could be seen as socially contaminating; the *Arthaśāstra* records a fine of 100 *panas* for inviting any Buddhist mendicants (*śākya*), Ājīvikas, *śūdras* or wandering ascetics (*pravrajita*) to dinners honouring gods or ancestors.[127]

In modern times, where attempts have been made to revive the forest tradition, it is notable that monks forsaking the domesticated mainstream career can encounter distrust and suspicion as often as they earn reverence for their superior sanctity. Writing about the movement begun by Acharn Mun, Acharn Tate mentioned the problems encountered by the first monk of *maha* grade (having passed Grade 3 in the Thai monastic education scale) to take to solitary wandering practising *thudong*: 'Most of the academic monks considered the going off on tudong a disgraceful thing to do.'[128]

What this shows is that, in modern as in ancient times, Buddhism has had to find a place for itself in the different cultural environments of real people struggling to survive in the real world; different cultures nurture different world views, values and prejudices. Recruits into the Buddhist order came from secular society and brought with them much of that cultural baggage. Buddhism has had to learn to survive too. The chief lesson that emerges from this review of the topic is that we must learn how to use the sources sensitively. The scriptures were compiled as manual and inspiration for those who wished to look beyond life in society; the challenge is to find in the texts the tell-tale traces of this life in society which the authors wished to transcend.

SOURCES

For the present study, the focus has been on the Pāli canon. The editions consulted are the texts and (except where otherwise noted) the translations published by the Pāli Text Society. The abbreviations used are as follows:

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126 M.I.465.

127 A.S.3.20.

128 Ajahn Tate, *The Autobiography of a Forest Monk*, tr. Bhikkhu Ariyesako, Wat Hin Mark Peng, 1993. On pp. 200-203 the author refers to the bitter criticism of a forest group by local settled monks.

A	*Anguttara Nikāya*
A.Ś.	*Arthaśāstra*
D	*Dīgha Nikāya*
Dhp	*Dhammapada*
It	*Itivuttaka*
J.I.A.B.S.	*Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*
Jat	*Jātaka*
M	*Majjhima Nikāya*
Ml	*Milindapañha*
Mvu	*Mahāvyutpatti*
P.E.D.	*Pali English Dictionary* (Rhys Davids & Stede, P.T.S.)
S	*Samyutta Nikāya*
Sn	*Suttanipāta*
Thag	*Theragāthā*
Thig	*Therīgāthā*
Ud	*Udāna*
Vin	*Vinaya Pitaka*
Z.D.M.G.	*Zeitschrift der deutschen Morgenländischen Gesell-schaft*

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REVISIONING DUALISM IN PATAÑJALI'S CLASSICAL YOGA[†]

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1. Introduction

This paper centers on the thought of Patañjali (ca second-third century CE), the great exponent of the authoritative classical Yoga school (*darśana*) of Hinduism and the reputed author of the *Yoga-Sūtra*. I will argue that Patañjali's philosophical perspective has, far too often, been looked upon as excessively "spiritual" or isolationistic to the point of being a world-denying philosophy, indifferent to moral endeavor, neglecting the world of nature and culture, and overlooking the highest potentials for human reality, vitality, and creativity. Contrary to the arguments presented by many scholars, which associate Patañjali's Yoga exclusively with extreme asceticism, mortification, denial, and the renunciation and abandonment of "material existence" (*prakṛti*) in favor of an elevated and isolated "spiritual state" (*puruṣa*) or disembodied state of spiritual liberation, I suggest that Patañjali's Yoga can be seen as a responsible engagement, in various ways, of "spirit" (*puruṣa* = intrinsic identity as Self, pure consciousness) and "matter" (*prakṛti* = the source of psychophysical being, which includes mind, body, nature) resulting in a highly developed, transformed, and participatory human nature and identity, an integrated and embodied state of liberated selfhood (*jīvanmukti*).

The intention of this paper is to reassess our understanding of Patañjali and the tradition of classical Yoga that he is credited for having founded. I have attempted to re-interpret a central feature of the *Yoga-Sūtra*, namely the objective of *cittavṛttinirodha* or the

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cessation of the [misidentification with the] modifications of the mind, and provide a fresh vision of the spiritual potential present in this seminal text thereby contributing to our understanding and reception of Yoga thought and spirituality. The interpretation of Patañjali's Yoga *Darśana* presented in this paper — which walks the line between an historical and hermeneutic-praxis (some might say theological or "systematic") orientation — counters the radically dualistic, isolationistic, and ontologically oriented interpretations of Yoga[1] presented by many scholars and suggests an open-ended, epistemologically oriented hermeneutic which, I maintain, is more appropriate for arriving at a genuine assessment of Patañjali's system.

It is often said that, like classical Sāṃkhya, Patañjali's Yoga is a dualistic system, understood in terms of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. Yet, I submit, Yoga scholarship has not clarified what "dualistic" means or why Yoga had to be "dualistic." Even in avowedly non-dualistic systems of thought such as Advaita Vedānta we can find numerous examples of basically dualistic modes of description and explanation.[2] It is important to note that the Sāṃkhyan dualism (that Yoga appropriates) is quite distinct from the Cartesian dualism which bifurcates reality into mental and material aspects. The dualistic perspective of Sāṃkhya is made up of *puruṣa* as pure consciousness, and *prakṛti* as everything else, including the mental and the material. Psyche and the external world are not ultimately different. Both are forms of insentient (nonconscious, *acetana*) *prakṛti*. With the above

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[1] The system of classical Yoga is often reduced to or fitted into a classical Sāṃkhyan scheme — the interpretations of which generally follow along radically dualistic lines. In their metaphysical ideas classical Sāṃkhya and Yoga are closely akin. However, both systems hold divergent views on important areas of doctrinal structure such as epistemology, ontology, ethics, and psychology, as well as differences pertaining to terminology. These differences derive in part from the different methodologies adopted by the two schools: Sāṃkhya, it has been argued, emphasizes a theoretical or intellectual analysis through inference and reasoning in order to bring out the nature of final emancipation, while Yoga stresses yogic perception and multiple forms of practice that culminate in *samādhi*. Moreover, there is clear evidence throughout all four *Pādas* of the *YS* of an extensive network of terminology that parallels Buddhist teachings and which is absent in the classical Sāṃkhya literature. Patañjali includes several *sūtras* on the "restraints" or *yamas* (namely, nonviolence [*ahiṃsā*], truthfulness [*satya*], non-stealing [*asteya*], chastity [*brahmacarya*], and nonpossession [*aparigraha*]) of the "eight-limbed" path of Yoga that are listed in the *Acārāṅga Sūtra* of Jainism (the earliest sections of which may date from the third or fourth century B.C.E.) thereby suggesting possible Jaina influences on the Yoga tradition. The topic of Buddhist or Jaina influence on Yoga doctrine (or vice versa) is, however, not the focus of this paper. The Sanskrit text of the *YS*, the *YB* of Vyāsa, the *TV* of Vācaspati Miśra, and the *RM* of Bhoja Rāja is from *The Yoga-sūtra of Patañjali* (1904).

[2] See, for example, Śaṅkara's (ca eighth-ninth century CE) use of *vyāvahārika* (the conventional empirical perspective) in contrast to *paramārthika* (the ultimate or absolute standpoint).

explanation held in mind I have adopted the simple term "matter" for *prakṛti*.

It does not seem inappropriate to suggest the possibility of Patañjali having asserted a provisional, descriptive, and "practical" metaphysics, i.e., in the *YS* the metaphysical schematic is abstracted from yogic experience, whereas in classical Sāṃkhya, as set out in Īśvara Kṛṣṇa's *Sāṃkhyakārikā*, "experiences" are fitted into a metaphysical structure. This approach would allow the *YS* to be interpreted along more open-ended, epistemologically oriented lines without being held captive by the radical, dualistic metaphysics of Sāṃkhya. Despite intentions to render the experiential dimension of Yoga, purged as far as possible from abstract metaphysical knowledge, many scholars have fallen prey to reading the *YS* from the most abstract level of the dualism of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* down to an understanding of the practices advocated. Then they proceed to impute an experiential foundation to the whole scheme informed not from mystical insight or yogic experience, but from the effort to form a consistent (dualistic) world-view, a view that culminates in a radical dualistic finality[3] or closure.

It should be noted that the contrast, suggested above, between the philosophical perspectives of Īśvara Kṛṣṇa and Patañjali is of crucial importance. Nevertheless, the theoretical connections and parallels between the *YS* and Sāṃkhya remain significant. Patañjali's philosophy, however, is not based upon mere theoretical or speculative knowledge. It elicits a practical, pragmatic, experiential/ perceptual (not merely inferential/theoretical) approach that Patañjali deems essential in order to deal effectively with our total human situation and provide real freedom, not just a theory of liberation or a metaphysical explanation of life. To this end Patañjali outlined, among other practices, an "eight-limbed" path of Yoga (*aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, *YS* II.29) dealing with the physical, moral, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of the yogin. Yoga is not content with knowledge (*jñāna*) perceived as a state that abstracts away from the world removing us from our human embodiment and activity in the world. Rather, Yoga emphasizes knowledge in the integrity of being and action and as serving the integration of the "person" as a "whole." Edgerton concluded in a study dedicated to the meaning of Yoga that: " ... Yoga

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3 See in particular: Feuerstein (1980: 14, 56, 108); Eliade (1969: 94-95, 99-100); Koelman (1970: 224, 251); and G. Larson (1987: 13) who classifies Patañjali's Yoga as a form of Sāṃkhya.

is not a 'system' of belief or of metaphysics. It is always a way, a method of getting something, usually salvation ... ."[4] But this does not say enough, does not fully take into account what might be called the *integrity* of Patañjali's Yoga. Yoga derives its real strength and value through an integration of theory and practice.

If one is to grasp how Yoga philosophy can be lived on a practical level, one must understand how *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* relate to one in practical, experiential, and personal terms. To this end Patañjali translated a "universal," macrocosmic perspective into subjective, microcosmic terms. Yoga philosophy, being historically rooted in a pedagogical context,[5] functions in part as a teaching method skillfully aimed at transforming, purifying, and illuminating human consciousness (i.e., the mind or *citta*, which can be described as a grasping, intentional, and volitional consciousness) and thus our perception and experience of reality. The metaphysics is united to the teaching tradition of spiritual preceptor (*guru*) and disciple (*śiṣya*) and is soteriological as well as practical in nature and purpose. The distinction between the two major categories in Yoga: *puruṣa* or *draṣṭṛ* (the "seer"), and *prakṛti* or *dṛśya* (the "seeable"), may not have been intended by Patañjali as a metaphysical theory of truth. Moreover, despite the fact that Patañjali initially adopts a Sāṃkhyan metaphysical orientation, there is no proof in the *YS* that his system stops at dualism (i.e., the dualism may be said to be open to the criterion of falsifiability playing only a provisional role in his system), or merely ends up, as many scholars have concluded, with a radical dualism in which *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, absolutely disjoined, are unable to "cooperate," establish a "harmony" and achieve a "balance" together. In this sense the *YS* can be understood not so much as contradicting Sāṃkhya but more so as accommodating and subsuming the philosophical stance in the *SK* by extending the meaning of purification and illumination of human identity to incorporate an enlightened mode of action as well as being.[6] As such, Yoga philosophy helps to resolve some of the tensions inherent in a radically dualistic perspective — as is exemplified in interpretations of classical Sāṃkhya — wherein *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* are utterly

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4   F. Edgerton (1924), "The Meaning of Sāṃkhya and Yoga," *AJP* 45, pp. 1-46.

5   See Chapter 1 in Whicher (1998).

6   See Whicher (1999).

separate and incapable of "uniting" through an integration of being and activity, that is, as an embodied state of freedom, consciousness, and being.

Unlike Sāṃkhya, Yoga maintains that knowledge (*jñāna*) *in itself* does not ultimately have the capacity to liberate human identity from the deeply embedded "seeds" of ignorance. The yogin can make further efforts to transform the mind through the commitment to a purification of all karmic residue. Such efforts can include ethical vows as well as subtilized forms of meditative discipline resulting in a total purification and illumination of consciousness even at the level of the mind. In this sense, Yoga suggests a deeper insight than Sāṃkhya into the functioning and structure of the mind and the mind's role in the final stages of purification and liberation.

In Sāṃkhya, knowledge precludes any further reason for *dharma* (*SK* 67). There is a relative absense of emphasis on purity and virtue within the system of Sāṃkhya.[7] Yoga allows for an enlightened, participatory perspective that can embody an enriched sense of *dharma* suggesting a responsiveness to life that no longer enslaves the yogin morally or epistemologically. This seems to be implied in the experience of the cloud of *dharma* (*dharma-megha*) *samādhi* (*YS* IV.29). At this high level realization in Yoga action does not end but becomes purified of afflicted impulses (*YS/YB* IV.30); nonafflicted action remains for the liberated yogin. In the context of our human embodied world and its possibilities, purified action in Yoga would appear to extend the implications of knowledge and in this sense the Yoga system can be viewed as being complementary with, not contradictory to Sāṃkhya. What Sāṃkhya does communicate is a context for liberation on a theoretical level.[8] This is not to deny that there may well have been practical, meditative structural approaches utilized in the earlier Sāṃkhyan tradition.[9] Yoga shows how liberating

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[7]   *SK* 44 states that "by virtue (*dharma*) [one obtains] ascent to higher planes", understood by Vācaspati Miśra to be heaven. Clearly this attainment is at variance with the goal of liberation, which can only be achieved through knowledge (*jñāna*).

[8]   But this is not to suggest that in Sāṃkhya knowledge is not a form of practice. In Yoga, however, practice does not end with knowledge.

[9]   In *Strukturen Yogischer Meditation* (1977), G. Oberhammer examines 'sāṃkhyan meditation', by which he means those meditative structural approaches that have been handed down in the Sāṃkhya tradition, particularly that of Vārṣagaṇya. Oberhammer's analysis of this 'yogic' orientation is based on relevant quotations found in the *Yuktidīpikā* and intends to show that the soteriology of the old Sāṃkhya tradition was not a purely rationalistic affair and that many of the Sāṃkhyan metaphysical categories can only be understood against a background of meditative praxis.

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insight can be applied in an ongoing process of purification; eventually, through *asamprajñāta-samādhi*, knowledge itself is transcended and ignorance discarded in the realization of the knower (*puruṣa*), an awakening that attains permanency in the state of "seedless" (*nirbīja*) *samādhi*. In Yoga philosophy, theory and practice form a continuum, are united, resulting in a transformation not only of consciousness but of our total psychophysical being. Yoga's message here seems simple enough yet can be so easily forgotton: experiences of insight need to be continuously cultivated through a deepening of practice and dispassion.

It has elsewhere been suggested[10] that Sāṃkhya and Yoga can be read sequentially. Transformative insight, the foundation of liberation in Sāṃkhya, can function as a basis for restructuring and purifying one's actions through yogic discipline resulting in the gradual dissolution of all karmic influence. To be sure, in both systems, the application or practice of knowledge (*jñāna*) or discriminative discernment (*vivekakhyāti*) is the foundational key to success.[11] But Yoga's emphasis on a programme of ongoing purification including the cultivation of virtue and a deepening of dispassion — even toward knowledge itself — allows for a nonafflicted mode of activity. Yoga includes at the highest level a clarity of knowledge with the integrity of being and action, all within the context of an embodied state of freedom.[12]

I am suggesting that Yoga need not contradict Sāṃkhya. Rather, the two systems may be understood as being complementary in that Yoga extends the meaning of purification and illumination of human identity to incorporate an enlightened mode of activity as well as knowledge. As such, Yoga philosophy can help to resolve some of the questions and tensions surrounding the nature of *karma* and past impressions (*saṃskāras*) that continue after knowledge takes place. From an examination of the final stages of purification in Yoga we need not conclude that liberative knowledge and virtuous activity are incompatible with one another, nor need we see detachment (*vairāgya*) as an abandonment of the world and the human relational

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[10] See Chapple (1996).

[11] Thus knowledge in Sāṃkhya, as in Yoga, can be seen as an authentic form of practice (*abhyāsa*) that transforms the mind and has soteriological import. This would seem to be the place given to knowledge (and Sāṃkhya) in the *BG* and the *SK*.

[12] For a discussion on the implications for an embodied freedom in classical Yoga and a reconsideration of the meaning of "aloneness" (*kaivalya*) see Whicher (1998).

sphere. Sāṃkhya does not discuss or explore the potential for human life rooted in an epistemic clarity that distinguishes authentic being (*puruṣa*) from a prakṛtic or guṇic identity. The Sāṃkhya system seems to rest content with a discriminating knowledge leading to a final isolation of *puruṣa* or absolute separation between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. The interpretation[13] of Yoga presented here resists the temptation to view Yoga merely within the framework of an isolationistic approach to liberation where the full potentialities for an embodied, purified, and illuminated self-identity are overly constrained within a radical and rigid dualistic metaphysical structure. It need not be the case that in classical Yoga liberation denotes a definitive incommensurability between spirit (*puruṣa*) and matter (*prakṛti*).

2. Cessation (*Nirodha*) and the 'Return to the Source' (*Pratiprasava*): Transformation or Negation of the Mind?

In Patañjali's central definition of Yoga, Yoga is defined as "the cessation (*nirodha*) of [the misidentification with] the modifications (*vṛtti*) of the mind (*citta*)".[14] What kind of "cessation" we must ask is Patañjali actually referring to in his classical definition of Yoga? I have elsewhere suggested (1997, *JIP* 25: 1-67) that *nirodha* denotes an epistemological emphasis and refers to the transformation of self-understanding brought about through the purification and illumination

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13   Our interpretation can be seen as walking the line between an historical and a hermeneutic-praxis (or systematic) orientation.

14   *YS* I.2 (p. 4): *yogaś cittavṛttinirodhaḥ*. The modifications or functions (*vṛtti*) of the mind (*citta*) are said to be fivefold (*YS* I.6), namely, 'valid cognition' (*pramāṇa*, which includes perception [*pratyakṣa*], inference [*anumāna*] and valid testimony [*āgama*]), 'error'/ 'misconception' (*viparyaya*), 'conceptualization' (*vikalpa*), 'sleep' (*nidrā*) and 'memory' (*smṛti*), and are described as being 'afflicted' (*kliṣṭa*) or 'nonafflicted' (*akliṣṭa*) (*YS* I.5). *Citta* is an umbrella term that incorporates 'intellect' (*buddhi*), 'sense of self' (*ahaṃkāra*) and 'mind-organ' (*manas*), and can be viewed as the aggregate of the cognitive, conative and affective processes and functions of phenomenal consciousness, i.e., it consists of a grasping, intentional and volitional consciousness. For an in-depth look at the meaning of the terms *citta* and *vṛtti* see I. Whicher (1997, 1998). "The Mind (*Citta*): Its Nature, Structure and Functioning in Classical Yoga." in *Saṃbhāṣā* Vols 18 (pp. 35-62) and 19 (pp. 23-82). In the first four *sūtras* of the first chapter (*Samādhi-Pāda*) the subject matter of the *YS* is mentioned, defined and characterized. The *sūtras* run as follows: *YS* I.1: "Now [begins] the discipline of Yoga." *YS* I.2: "Yoga is the cessation of [the misidentification with] the modifications of the mind." *YS* I.3: "Then [when that cessation has taken place] there is abiding in the seer's own form (i.e., *puruṣa* or intrinsic identity)." *YS* I.4: "Otherwise [there is] conformity to (i.e., misidentification with) the modifications [of the mind]." *YS* I.1-4 (pp. 1, 4, 7, and 7 respectively): *atha yogānuśāsanam; yogaś cittavṛttinirodhaḥ; tadā draṣṭuḥ svarūpe 'vasthānam; vṛttisārūpyam itaratra.* For a more comprehensive study of classical Yoga including issues dealt with in this paper see Whicher (1998) *The Integrity of the Yoga Darśana* (SUNY Press).

of consciousness; *nirodha* is not (for the yogin) the ontological cessation of *prakṛti* (i.e., the mind and *vṛttis*). Seen here, *nirodha* thus is not, as is often explained, an inward movement that annihilates or suppresses *vṛttis*, thoughts, intentions, or ideas (*pratyaya*), nor is it the nonexistence or absence of *vṛtti*; rather, *nirodha* involves a progressive unfoldment of perception (*yogi-pratyakṣa*) that eventually reveals our true identity as *puruṣa*. It is the state of affliction (*kleśa*) evidenced in the mind and not the mind itself that is at issue. *Cittavṛtti* does not stand for all modifications or mental processes (cognitive, affective, emotive), but is the very seed (*bīja*) mechanism of the misidentification with *prakṛti* from which all other *vṛttis* and thoughts arise and are (mis)appropriated or self-referenced in the state of ignorance (*avidyā*), that is, the unenlightened state of mind. Spiritual ignorance gives rise to a malfunctioning or misalignment of *vṛtti* with consciousness that in Yoga can be corrected thereby allowing for a proper alignment or "right" functioning of *vṛtti*.[15] It is the *cittavṛtti* as our confused and mistaken identity, not our *vṛttis*, thoughts, and experiences *in total* that must be brought to a state of definitive cessation.

From the perspective of the discerning yogin (*vivekin*) human identity contained within the domain of the three *guṇas* of *prakṛti* (i.e., *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*) amounts to nothing more than sorrow and dissatisfaction (*duḥkha*).[16] The declared goal of classical Yoga, as with Sāṃkhya and Buddhism, is to overcome all suffering (*duḥkha*, *YS* II.16) by bringing about an inverse movement or counter-flow (*pratiprasava*)[17] understood as a "return to the origin"[18] or "process-of-involution"[19] of the *guṇas*, a kind of reabsorption into the transcendent purity of being itself. What does this "process-of-involution" — variously referred to as "return to the origin," "dissolution into the source"[20] or "withdrawal from manifestation" — actually mean? Is it a definitive ending to the perceived world of the

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15   See Whicher (1997) "Nirodha, Yoga Praxis and the Transformation of the Mind".

16   *YS* II.15 (p. 74): *pariṇāmatāpasaṃskāraduḥkhair guṇavṛttivirodhāc ca duḥkham eva sarvaṃ vivekinaḥ.*"Because of the dissatisfaction and sufferings due to change and anxieties and the latent impressions, and from the conflict of the modifications of the *guṇas*, for the discerning one, all is sorrow alone."

17   Patañjali uses the term *pratiprasava* twice, in *YS* II.10 and IV.34.

18   See Chapple and Kelly (1990) p. 60.

19   Feuerstein (1979a) p. 65.

20   Cf. T. Leggett (1990) p. 195 and U. Arya (1986) pp. 146, 471.

yogin comprised of change and transformation, forms and phenomena? Ontologically conceived, *prasava* signifies the "flowing forth" of the primary constituents or qualities of *prakṛti* into the multiple forms of the universe in all its dimensions, i.e., all the processes of manifestation and actualization or "creation" (*sarga, prasarga*). *Pratiprasava* on the other hand denotes the process of "dissolution into the source" or "withdrawal from manifestation" of those forms relative to the personal, microcosmic level of the yogin who is about to attain freedom (*apavarga*).

Does a "return to the origin" culminate in a state of freedom in which one is stripped of all human identity and void of any association with the world including one's practical livelihood? The ontological emphasis usually given to the meaning of *pratiprasava* — implying for the yogin a literal dissolution of *prakṛti*'s manifestation — would seem to support a view, one which is prominent in Yoga scholarship, of spiritual liberation denoting an existence wholly transcendent (and therefore stripped or deprived) of all manifestation including the human relational sphere. Is this the kind of spiritually emancipated state that Patañjali had in mind (pun included)? In *YS* II.3-17 (which set the stage for the remainder of the chapter on yogic means or *sādhana*), Patañjali describes *prakṛti*, the "seeable" (including our personhood), in the context of the various afflictions (*kleśas*) that give rise to an afflicted and mistaken identity of self. Afflicted identity is constructed out of and held captive by the root affliction of ignorance (*avidyā*) and its various forms of karmic bondage. Yet, despite the clear association of *prakṛti* with the bondage of ignorance (*avidyā*), there are no real grounds for purporting that *prakṛti* herself is to be *equated* with or subsumed under the afflictions. To equate *prakṛti* with affliction itself implies that as a product of spiritual ignorance, *prakṛti*, along with the afflictions, is conceived as a reality that the yogin should ultimately avoid or discard completely. Patañjali leaves much room for understanding "dissolution" or "return to the source" with an epistemological emphasis thereby allowing the whole system of the Yoga *Darśana* to be interpreted along more open-ended lines. In other words, what actually "dissolves" or is ended in Yoga is the yogin's *misidentification* with *prakṛti*, a mistaken identity of self that — contrary to authentic identity, namely *puruṣa* — can be nothing more than a product of the three *guṇas* under the influence of spiritual ignorance. Understood as such, *pratiprasava* need not denote

the definitive ontological dissolution of manifest *prakṛti* for the yogin, but rather refers to the process of "subtilization" or sattvification of consciousness so necessary for the uprooting of misidentification — the incorrect world-view born of *avidyā* — or incapacity of the yogin to "see" from the yogic perspective of the seer (*draṣṭṛ*), our authentic identity as *puruṣa*.

To repeat, the discerning yogin sees (*YS* II.15) that this guṇic world or cycle of saṃsāric identity is itself dissatisfaction (*duḥkha*). But we must ask, what exactly is the problem being addressed in Yoga? What is at issue in Yoga philosophy? Is our ontological status as a human being involved in day to day existence forever in doubt, in fact in need of being negated, dissolved in order for authentic identity (*puruṣa*), immortal consciousness, finally to dawn? Having overcome all ignorance, is it then possible for a human being to live in the world and no longer be in conflict with oneself and the world? Can the *guṇas* cease to function in a state of ignorance and conflict in the mind? Must the guṇic constitution of the human mind and the whole of prakṛtic existence disappear, dissolve for the yogin? Can the ways of spiritual ignorance be replaced by an aware, conscious, nonafflicted identity and activity that transcend the conflict and confusion of ordinary, saṃsāric life? Can we live, according to Patañjali's Yoga, an embodied state of freedom?

3. "Aloneness" (*Kaivalya*): Implications for an Embodied Freedom

In the classical traditions of Sāṃkhya and Yoga, *kaivalya*, meaning "aloneness,"[21] is generally understood to be the state of the unconditional existence of *puruṣa*. In the *YS*, *kaivalya* can refer more precisely to the "aloneness of seeing" (*dṛśeḥ kaivalyam*) which, as Patañjali states, follows from the disappearance of ignorance (*avidyā*) and its creation of *saṃyoga*[22] — the conjunction of the seer (*puruṣa*) and the seeable (i.e., *citta, guṇas*) — explained by Vyāsa as a mental superimposition (*adhyāropa*, *YB* II.18). "Aloneness" thus can be

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21   The term *kaivalya* comes from *kevala*, meaning 'alone'. Feuerstein (1979a: 75) also translates *kaivalya* as "aloneness" but with a metaphysical or ontological emphasis that implies the absolute separation of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*.

22   *YS* II.25 (p. 96): *tadabhāvāt saṃyogābhāvo hānaṃ taddṛśeḥ kaivalyam*.

construed as *puruṣa*'s innate capacity for pure, unbroken, non-attached seeing/perceiving, observing or "knowing" of the content of the mind (*citta*).[23] In an alternative definition, Patañjali explains *kaivalya* as the "return to the origin" (*pratiprasava*) of the *guṇas*, which have lost all soteriological purpose for the *puruṣa* that has, as it were, recovered its transcendent autonomy.[24] This *sūtra* (*YS* IV.34) also classifies *kaivalya* as the establishment in "own form/ nature" (*svarūpa*), and the power of higher awareness (*citiśakti*).[25] Although the seer's (*draṣṭṛ/puruṣa*) capacity for "seeing" is an unchanging yet dynamic power of consciousness that should not be truncated in any way, nevertheless our karmically distorted or skewed perceptions vitiate against the natural fullness of "seeing." Having removed the "failure-to-see" (*adarśana*), the soteriological purpose of the *guṇas* in the saṃsāric condition of the mind is fulfilled; the mind is relieved of its former role of being a vehicle for *avidyā*, the locus of egoity and misidentification, and the realization of pure seeing — the nature of the seer alone — takes place.

According to yet another *sūtra* (*YS* III.55), we are told that *kaivalya* is established when the *sattva* of consciousness has reached a state of purity analogous to that of the *puruṣa*.[26] Through the process of subtilization or "return to the origin" (*pratiprasava*) in the *sattva*, the transformation (*pariṇāma*) of the mind (*citta*) takes place at the deepest level bringing about a radical change in perspective: the former impure, fabricated states constituting a fractured identity of self are dissolved resulting in the complete purification of mind. Through knowledge (in *samprajñāta-samādhi*) and its transcendence (in *asamprajñāta-samādhi*) self-identity overcomes its lack of

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23   *YS* II.20 and IV.18.

24   *YS* IV.34 (p. 207): *puruṣārthaśūnyānāṃ guṇānāṃ pratiprasavaḥ kaivalyaṃ svarūpa-pratiṣṭhā vā citiśaktir iti.*

25   See n. 24 above.

26   *YS* III.55 (p. 174): *sattvapuruṣayoḥ śuddhisāmye kaivalyam iti.* One must be careful not to characterize the state of *sattva* itself as liberation or *kaivalya*, for without the presence of *puruṣa* the mind (as reflected consciousness) could not function in its most transparent aspect as *sattva*. It is not accurate, according to Yoga philosophy, to say that the *sattva* is equivalent to liberation itself. The question of the nature of the *guṇas* from the enlightened perspective is an interesting one. In the *Bhagavadgītā* (II.45) Kṛṣṇa advises Arjuna to become free from the three *guṇas* and then gives further instructions to be established in eternal *sattva* (beingness, light, goodness, clarity, knowledge), free of dualities, free of acquisition-and-possession, Self-possessed (*nirdvandvo nityasattvastho niryogakṣema ātmavān*). It would appear from the above instructions that the nature of the *sattva* being referred to here transcends the limitations of the nature of *sattva-guṇa* which can still have a binding effect in the form of attachment to joy and knowledge. It is, however, only by first overcoming *rajas* and *tamas* that liberation is possible.

intrinsic grounding, a lack sustained and exacerbated by the web of afflictions in the form of attachment, aversion, and the compulsive clinging to life based on the fear of extinction. The yogin is no longer · dependent on liberating knowledge (mind-*sattva*),[27] is no longer attached to *vrtti* as a basis for self-identity. Cessation, it must be emphasized, does not mark a definitive disappearance of the *gunas* from *purusa*'s view.[28] For the liberated yogin, the *gunas* cease to exist in the form of *avidyā* and its *samskāras*, *vrttis*, and false or fixed ideas (*pratyaya*) of selfhood that formerly veiled true identity. The changing gunic modes cannot alter the yogin's now purified and firmly established consciousness. The mind has been liberated from the *egocentric world of attachment to things prakrtic*. Now the yogin's identity (as *purusa*), disassociated from ignorance, is untouched, unaffected by qualities of mind,[29] uninfluenced by the *vrttis* constituted of the three *gunas*. The mind and *purusa* attain to a sameness of purity (*YS* III.55), of harmony, balance, evenness, and a workability together: the mind appearing in the nature of *purusa*.[30]

It can be stated that *kaivalya* in no way destroys or negates the personality of the yogin, but is an unconditional state in which all the obstacles or distractions preventing an immanent and purified relationship or engagement of person with nature and spirit (*purusa*) have been removed. The mind, which previously functioned under the sway of ignorance coloring and blocking our perception of authentic identity, has now become purified and no longer operates as a locus of misidentification, confusion, and dissatisfaction (*duhkha*). *Sattva*, the finest quality (*guna*) of the mind, has the capacity to be perfectly lucid/transparent, like a dust-free mirror in which the light of *purusa* is clearly reflected and the discriminative discernment (*vivekakhyāti*)[31] between *purusa* and the *sattva* of the mind (as the finest nature of the seeable) can take place.[32]

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[27] *YB* III.55 (p. 175): *na hi dagdhaklesabījasya jñāne punar apeksā kācid asti.* "When the seeds of afflictions have been scorched there is no longer any dependence at all on further knowledge."

[28] H. Āranya writes (1963: 123) that in the state of *nirodha* the *gunas* "do not die out but their unbalanced activity due to non-equilibrium that was taking place ... only ceases on account of the cessation of the cause (*avidyā* or nescience) which brought about their contact."

[29] *YB* IV.25 (p. 201): *purusas tv asatyām avidyāyām suddhas cittadharmair aparāmrsta.*

[30] *YB* I.41.

[31] *YS* II.26.

[32] *YS* III.49.

The crucial (ontological) point to be made here is that in the "aloneness" of *kaivalya prakṛti* ceases to perform an obstructing role. In effect, *prakṛti* herself has become liberated[33] from *avidyā*'s grip including the misconceptions, misappropriations, and misguided relations implicit within a world of afflicted identity. The mind has been transformed, liberated from the egocentric world of attachment, its former afflicted nature abolished; and self-identity left alone in its "own form" or true nature as *puruṣa* is never again confused with all the relational acts, intentions, and volitions of empirical existence. Vyāsa explicitly states that emancipation happens in the mind and does not literally apply to *puruṣa* which is by definition already free and therefore has no intrinsic need to be released from the fetters of saṃsāric existence.[34] While this is true from the enlightened perspective, it would not be inappropriate to suggest that figuratively speaking, in *kaivalya*, *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* are simultaneously liberated in that, all ignorance having been removed, *they are both "known," included, and are therefore free to be what they are.* There being no power of misidentification remaining in *nirbīja-samādhi*,[35] the mind ceases to operate within the context of the afflictions, karmic accumulations, and consequent cycles of *saṃsāra* implying a mistaken identity of selfhood subject to birth and death.

The *Yoga-Sūtra* has often been regarded as calling for the severance of *puruṣa* from *prakṛti*; concepts such as liberation, cessation, detachment/dispassion, and so forth have been interpreted in an explicitly negative light. Max Müller, citing Bhoja Rāja's commentary[36] (eleventh century CE), refers to Yoga as "separation" (*viyoga*).[37] More recently, numerous other scholars[38] have endorsed this interpretation, that is, the absolute separateness of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. In asserting the absolute separation of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*,

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33   Vijñāna Bhikṣu insists (*YV* IV.34: 141) that *kaivalya* is a state of liberation for both *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* each reaching its respective natural or intrinsic state. He then, however, cites the *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā* (62) where it is stated that no *puruṣa* is bound, liberated or transmigrates. It is only *prakṛti* abiding in her various forms that transmigrates, is bound and becomes liberated. For references to Vijñāna Bhikṣu's *YV* I have consulted T. S. Rukmani (1981, 1983, 1987, 1989).

34   *YB* II.18.

35   *YS* I.51 and III.8: the state of *nirbīja* or "seedless" *samādhi* can be understood as the liberated state where no "seed" of ignorance remains, any further potential for affliction (i.e., as mental impressions or *saṃskāras*) having been purified from the mind.

36   *RM* I.1 (p. 1).

37   Müller (1899: 309).

38   See, for example, Eliade (1969), Koelman (1970), Feuerstein (1979a), and Larson (1987).

scholars and non-scholars alike have tended to disregard the possibility for other (fresh) hermeneutical options, and this radical, dualistic metaphysical closure of sorts surrounding the nature and meaning of Patañjali's Yoga has proved detrimental to a fuller understanding of the Yoga *Darśana* by continuing a tradition based on an isolationistic, one-sided reading (or perhaps misreading) of the *YS* and Vyāsa's commentary. Accordingly, the absolute separation of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* can only be interpreted as a disembodied state implying death to the physical body. To dislodge the sage from bodily existence is to undermine the integrity of the pedagogical context that lends so much credibility or "weight" to the Yoga system. Thus it need not be assumed that in Yoga liberation coincides with physical death.[39] This would only allow for a soteriological end state of "disembodied liberation" (*videhamukti*). What is involved in Yoga is the death of the atomistic, egoic identity, the dissolution of the karmic web of *saṃsāra* that generates notions of one being a subject trapped in the prakṛtic constitution of a particular body-mind.

Not being content with mere theoretical knowledge, Yoga is committed to a practical way of life. To this end, Patañjali included in his presentation of Yoga an outline of the "eight-limbed" path (*aṣṭāṅga-yoga*)[40] dealing with the physical, moral, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of the yogin, an integral path that emphasizes organic continuity, balance, and integration in contrast to the discontinuity, imbalance, and disintegration inherent in *saṃyoga*. The idea of cosmic balance and of the mutual support and upholding of the

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[39] I am here echoing some of the points made by Chapple in his paper entitled,"*Citta-vṛtti* and Reality in the *Yoga Sūtra*" in *Sāṃkhya-Yoga: Proceedings of the IASWR Conference, 1981* (Stoney Brook, New York: The Institute for Advanced Studies of World Religions, 1983), pp. 103-119. See also Chapple and Kelly (1990: 5) where the authors state: " ... *kaivalyam* ... is not a catatonic state nor does it require death." *SK* 67 acknowledges that even the "potter's wheel" continues to turn because of the force of past impressions (*saṃskāras*); but in Yoga, higher dispassion and *asamprajñāta* eventually exhaust all the impressions or karmic residue. Through a continued program of ongoing purification Yoga allows for the possibility of an embodied state of freedom utterly unburdened by the effects of past actions. As such Yoga constitutes an advance over the fatalistic perspective in Sāṃkhya where the "wheel of *saṃsāra*" continues (after the initial experience of liberating knowledge) until, in the event of separation from the body, *prakṛti* ceases and unending "isolation" (*kaivalya*) is attained (*SK* 68). In any case, the yogic state of supracognitive *samādhi* or enstasy goes beyond the liberating knowledge of *viveka* in the Sāṃkhyan system in that the yogin must develop dispassion even toward discriminative discernment itself. For more on an analysis of the notion of liberation in Sāṃkhya and Yoga see C. Chapple's chapter on "Living Liberation in Sāṃkhya and Yoga" in *Living Liberation in Hindu Thought*, ed. by Andrew O. Fort and Patricia Y. Mumme (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), and Whicher (1999).

[40] *YS* II.29; see my discussion on *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* in (1997) "Nirodha, Yoga Praxis and the Transformation of the Mind."

various parts of nature and society is not foreign to Yoga thought. Vyāsa deals with the theory of "nine causes" (nava kāraṇāni) or types of causation according to tradition.[41] The ninth type of cause is termed dhṛti — meaning "support" or "sustenance." Based on Vyāsa's explanation of dhṛti we can see how mutuality and sustenance are understood as essential conditions for the maintenance of the natural and social world. There is an organic interdependence of all living entities wherein all (i.e., the elements, animals, humans, and divine bodies) work together for the "good" of the whole and for each other.

Far from being exclusively a subjectively oriented and introverted path of withdrawal from life, classical Yoga acknowledges the intrinsic value of "support" and "sustenance" and the interdependence of all living (embodied) entities, thus upholding organic continuity, balance, and integration within the natural and social world. Having achieved that level of insight (prajñā) that is "truth-bearing" (ṛtaṃbharā),[42] the yogin perceives the natural order (ṛta) of cosmic existence, "unites" with, and embodies that order. To fail to see clearly (adarśana) is to fall into disorder, disharmony, and conflict with oneself and the world. In effect, to be ensconced in ignorance implies a disunion with the natural order of life and inextricably results in a failure to embody that order. Through Yoga one gains proper access to the world and is therefore established in right relationship to the world. Far from being denied or renounced, the world, for the yogin, has become transformed, properly engaged.

We need not read Patañjali as saying that the culmination of all yogic endeavor — kaivalya — is a static finality or inactive, isolated, solipsistic state of being. Kaivalya can be seen to incorporate an integrated, psychological consciousness along with the autonomy of pure consciousness, yet pure consciousness to which the realm of the gunas (e.g., psychophysical being) is completely attuned and integrated. On the level of individuality, the yogin has found his (her) place in the world at large, "fitting into the whole."[43]

In the last chapter of the YS (Kaivalya-Pāda), "aloneness" (kaivalya) is said to ensue upon the attainment of dharmamegha-samādhi, the "cloud of dharma" samādhi. At this level of practice, the

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[41]   YB II.28 (pp. 99-101).

[42]   YS I.48.

[43]   See K. Klostermaier (1989), "Spirituality and Nature" in Hindu Spirituality: Vedas Through Vedānta ed. by Krishna Sivaraman (London: SCM Press) pp. 319-337.

yogin has abandoned any search for (or attachment to) reward or "profit" from his or her meditational practice; a non-acquisitive attitude (*akusīda*) must take place at the highest level of yogic discipline.[44] Vyāsa emphasizes that the identity of *puruṣa* is not something to be acquired (*upādeya*) or discarded (*heya*).[45] The perspective referred to as "*Pātañjala Yoga Darśana*" culminates in a permanent state of clear "seeing" brought about through the discipline of Yoga. Yoga thus incorporates both an end state or "goal" and a process.[46]

Dharmamegha-samādhi presupposes that the yogin has cultivated higher dispassion (*para-vairāgya*) — the means to the enstatic consciousness realized in *asamprajñāta-samādhi*.[47] Thus, *dharma-megha-samādhi* is more or less a synonym of *asamprajñāta-samādhi* and can even be understood as the consummate phase of the awakening disclosed in enstasy, the final step on the long and arduous yogic journey to authentic identity and "aloneness."[48] A permanent

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[44] *YS* IV.29 (p. 202): *prasaṃkhyānye 'py akusīdasya sarvathā vivekakhyāter dharmameghaḥ samādhiḥ.*

[45] *YB* II.15 (p. 78): *tatra hātuḥ svarūpam upādeyaṃ vā heyaṃ vā na bhavitum arhati.* "Here, the true nature/identity of the one who is liberated cannot be something to be acquired or discarded."

[46] Thus the term "Yoga" (like the terms "*nirodha*" and "*samādhi*") is ambiguous in that it means both the process of purification and illumination and the final result of liberation or "aloneness." Due to Yoga's traditional *praxis*-orientation it becomes all too easy to reduce Yoga to a "means only" approach to well-being and spiritual enlightenment. In the light of its popularity in the Western world today in which technique and practice have been emphasized often to the exclusion of philosophical/theoretical understanding and a proper pedagogical context, there is a great danger in simply reifying practice whereby practice becomes something the ego does for the sake of its own security. Seen here, practice — often then conceived as a superior activity in relation to all other activities — becomes all-important in that through the activity called "practice" the ego hopes and strives to become "enlightened." Practice thus becomes rooted in a future-oriented perspective largely motivated out of a fear of not becoming enlightened; it degenerates into a form of selfishly appropriated activity where "means" become ends-in-themselves. Moreover, human relationships become instruments for the greater "good" of Self-realization. Thus rationalized, relationships are seen as having only a tentative nature. The search for enlightenment under the sway of this kind of instrumental rationality/reasoning (that is, the attempt to "gain" something from one's practice, i.e., enlightenment) never really goes beyond the level of ego and its compulsive search for permanent security which of course, according to Yoga thought, is an inherently afflicted state of affairs. To be sure, the concern of Yoga is to (re)discover *puruṣa*, to be restored to true identity thus overcoming dissatisfaction, fear and misidentification by uprooting and eradicating the disease of ignorance (*avidyā*). Yet, as W. Halbfass puts it, true identity "cannot be really lost, forgotten or newly acquired" (1991: 252) for liberation "is not to be produced or accomplished in a literal sense, but only in a figurative sense" (ibid: 251). Sufficient means for the sattvification of the mind are, however, both desirable and necessary in order to prepare the yogin for the necessary identity shift from egoity to *puruṣa*. By acknowledging that "aloneness" cannot be an acquired state resulting from or caused by yogic methods and techniques, and that *puruṣa* cannot be known (*YB* III.35), acquired or discarded/lost (*YB* II.15), Yoga in effect transcends its own result-orientation as well as the categories of means and ends.

[47] *YB* I.18.

[48] See Feuerstein (1980: 98).

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identity shift — from the perspective of the human personality to *puruṣa* — takes place. Now free from any dependence on or subordination to knowledge or *vṛtti*, and detached from the world of misidentification (*saṃyoga*), the yogin yet retains the purified guṇic powers of virtue including illuminating "knowledge of all"[49] (due to purified *sattva*), nonafflicted activity[50] (due to purified *rajas*), and a healthy, stable body-form (due to purified *tamas*).

YS IV.30 declares: "From that [*dharmamegha-samādhi*] there is the cessation of afflicted action."[51] Hence the binding influence of the *guṇas* in the form of the afflictions, past actions, and misguided relationships is overcome; what remains is a "cloud of *dharma*" which includes an "eternality of knowledge" free from all impure covering (*āvaraṇa-mala*, *YS* IV.31) or veiling affliction and where "little (remains) to be known."[52] The eternality or endlessness of knowledge is better understood metaphorically rather than literally: It is not knowledge expanded to infinity but implies *puruṣa*-realization which transcends the limitations and particulars of knowledge (*vṛtti*).

The culmination of the Yoga system is found when, following from *dharmamegha-samādhi*, the mind and actions are freed from misidentification and affliction and one is no longer deluded/confused with regard to one's true form (*svarūpa*) or intrinsic identity. At this stage of practice the yogin is disconnected (*viyoga*) from all patterns

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49   *YS* III.49 and III.54.

50   *YS* IV.7; see also *YS* IV.30 (n. 51 below).

51   *YS* IV.30 (p. 202): *tataḥ kleśakarmanivṛttiḥ.* Thus, it may be said that to dwell without defilement in a "cloud of *dharma*" is the culminating description by Patañjali of what tradition later referred to as living liberation (*jīvanmukti*). To be sure, there is a "brevity of description" in the *YS* regarding the state of liberation. Only sparingly, with reservation (one might add, caution) and mostly in metaphorical terms does Patañjali speak about the qualities exhibited by the liberated yogin. Chapple (1996: 116, see below) provides three possible reasons for this "brevity of description" regarding living liberation in the context of the *YS* (and *Sāṃkhya*, i.e., the *SK* of Īśvara Kṛṣna): (1) He states: "(T)he genre in which both texts were written does not allow for the sort of narrative and poetic embellishment found in the epics and Purāṇas." (2) Perhaps, as Chapple suggests "... a deliberate attempt has been made to guarantee that the recognition of a liberated being remains in the hands of a spiritual preceptor." What is to be noted here is that the oral and highly personalized lineage tradition within Yoga stresses the authority of the *guru* which guards against false claims to spiritual attainment on the part of others and thereby "helps to ensure the authenticity and integrity of the tradition." (3) A further reason for brevity "could hinge on the logical contradiction that arises due to the fact that the notion of self is so closely identified with *ahaṃkāra* [the mistaken ego sense or afflicted identity]. It would be an oxymoron for a person to say [']I am liberated.[']" The Self (*puruṣa*) is of course not an object which can be seen by itself thus laying emphasis, as Chapple points out, on the ineffable nature of the liberative state which transcends mind-content, all marks and activity itself.

52   *YS* IV.31 (p. 203): *tadā sarvāvaraṇamalāpetasya jñānasyā"nantyājjñeyam alpam.*

of action motivated by the ego. According to both Vyāsa[53] and the sixteenth century commentator Vijñāna Bhikṣu,[54] one to whom this high state of purification takes place is designated as a *jīvanmukta*: one who is liberated while still alive (i.e., embodied or living liberation).

By transcending the normative conventions and obligations of karmic behavior, the yogin acts morally not as an extrinsic response and out of obedience to an external moral code of conduct, but as an intrinsic response and as a matter of natural, purified inclination. The stainless luminosity of pure consciousness is revealed as one's fundamental nature. The yogin does not act *saṃsārically* and ceases to act from the perspective of a delusive sense of self confined within *prakṛti*'s domain. Relinquishing all obsessive or selfish concern with the results of activity, the yogin remains wholly detached from the egoic fruits of action.[55] This does not imply that the yogin loses all orientation for action. Only attachment (and compulsive, inordinate desire), not action itself, sets in motion the law of moral causation (*karma*) by which a person is implicated in *saṃsāra*. The yogin is said to be nonattached to either virtue or non-virtue, and is no longer oriented within the egological patterns of thought as in the epistemically distorted condition of *saṃyoga*. This does not mean, as some scholars have misleadingly concluded, that the spiritual adept or yogin is free to commit immoral acts,[56] or that the yogin is motivated by selfish concerns.[57]

Actions must not only be executed in the spirit of unselfishness (i.e., sacrifice) or detachment, they must also be ethically sound, reasonable and justifiable. Moreover, the yogin's spiritual journey — far from being an "a-moral process"[58] — is a highly moral process!

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53. See *YB* IV.30 (pp. 202-203): *kleśakarmanivṛttau jīvann eva vidvān vimukto bhavati.* On cessation of afflicted action, the knower is released while yet living."

54 *YV* IV.30 (pp. 123-124). Elsewhere in his *Yoga-Sāra-Saṃgraha* (G. Jha trans., p. 17) Vijñāna Bhikṣu tells us that the yogin who is "established in the state of *dharmamegha-samādhi* is called a *jīvanmukta*" (... *dharmameghaḥ samādhiḥ ... asyāmavasthāyāṃ jīvanmukta ity ucyate*). Vijñāna Bhikṣu is critical of Vedāntins (i.e., Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta school) that, he says, associate the *jīvanmukta* with ignorance ('*avidyā-kleśa*') — probably because of the liberated being's continued link with the body — despite Yoga's insistence on the complete overcoming of the afflictions.

55 This is the essence of Kṛṣṇa's teaching in the *Bhagavadgītā* on *karmayoga*; see, for example, *BG* IV.20.

56 See R. C. Zaehner (1974), *Our Savage God* (London: Collins) pp. 97-98.

57 See B.-A. Scharfstein (1974), *Mystical Experience* (Baltimore, MD: Penguin) pp. 131-132.

58 See Feuerstein (1979a: 81).

The yogin's commitment to the sattvification of consciousness, including the cultivation of moral virtues such as compassion (karuṇā)[59] and nonviolence (ahiṃsā),[60] is not an "a-moral" enterprise, nor is it an expression of indifference, aloofness, or an uncaring attitude to others. Moral disciplines are engaged as a natural outgrowth of intelligent (sattvic) self-understanding, insight, and commitment to self-transcendence that takes consciousness out of (ec-stasis) its identification with the rigid structure of the monadic ego, thereby reversing the inveterate tendency of this ego to inflate itself at the expense of its responsibility in relation to others.

Having defined the "goal" of Yoga as "aloneness" (kaivalya), the question must now be asked: What kind of "aloneness" was Patañjali talking about? "Aloneness," I suggest, is not the isolation of the seer (draṣṭr, puruṣa) separate from the seeable (dṛśya, prakṛti), as is unfortunately far too often maintained as the goal of Yoga, but refers to the "aloneness" of the power of "seeing" (YS II.20, 25) in its innate purity and clarity without any epistemological distortion and moral defilement. The cultivation of nirodha uproots the compulsive tendency to reify the world and oneself (i.e., that pervading sense of separate ego irrevocably divided from the encompassing world) with an awareness that reveals the transcendent, yet immanent seer (puruṣa). Through clear "seeing" (dṛśi) the purpose of Yoga is fulfilled, and the yogin, free from all misidentification and impure karmic residue (as in the former contextual sphere of cittavṛtti), gains full, immediate access to the world. By accessing the world in such an open and direct manner, in effect "uniting" (epistemologically) with the world, the yogin ceases to be encumbered by egoism (i.e., asmitā and its egoic attitudes and identity patterns), which, enmeshed in conflict and confusion and holding itself as separate from the world, misappropriates the world.

Yoga can be seen to unfold — in samādhi — states of epistemic oneness that reveal the non-separation of knower, knowing, and the known (YS I.41) grounding our identity in a nonafflicted mode of action. Kaivalya implies a power of "seeing" in which the dualisms rooted in our egocentric patterns of attachment, aversion, fear, and so

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59   YS I.33 (p. 38): maitrīkaruṇām uditopekṣāṇām sukhaduḥkhapuṇyāpuṇyaviṣayāṇām bhāvanātaś cittaprasādanam. "The mind is made pure and clear from the cultivation of friendliness, compassion, happiness and equanimity in conditions or toward objects of joy, sorrow, merit or demerit respectively."

60   YS II.35.

forth have been transformed into unselfish ways of being with others.[61] The psychological, ethical, and social implications of this kind of identity transformation are, needless to say, immense. I am suggesting that Yoga does not destroy or anesthetize our feelings and emotions thereby encouraging neglect and indifference toward others. On the contrary, the process of "cessation" (*nirodha*) steadies one for a life of compassion, discernment, and service informed by a "seeing" that is able to understand (literally meaning "to stand among, hence observe") — and is in touch with — the needs of others. What seems especially relevant for our understanding of Yoga ethics is the enhanced capacity generated in Yoga for empathic identification with the object one seeks to understand. This is a far cry from the portrayal of the yogin as a disengaged figure, psychologically and physically removed from the human relational sphere, who in an obstinate and obtrusive fashion severs all ties with the world. Such an image of a wise yogin merely serves to circumscribe our vision of humanity and, if anything else, stifle the spirit by prejudicing a spiritual, abstract (and disembodied) realm over and against nature and our human embodiment. In Yoga philosophy "seeing" is not only a cognitive term but implies purity of mind, that is, it has moral content and value. Nor is "knowledge" (*jñāna, vidyā*) in the Yoga tradition to be misconstrued as a "bloodless" or "heartless" gnosis.

This paper therefore suggests that through the necessary transformation of consciousness brought about in *samādhi*, an authentic and fruitful coherence of self-identity, perception, and activity emerges out of the former fragmented consciousness in *saṃyoga*. If Patañjali's perception of the world of forms and differences had been destroyed or discarded, how could he have had such insight into Yoga and the intricacies and subtle nuances of the unenlightened state?[62] If through *nirodha* the individual form and the whole world had been canceled for Patañjali, he would more likely have spent the rest of his days in the inactivity and isolation of transcendent oblivion rather than present Yoga philosophy to others! Rather than being handicapped by the exclusion of thinking, perceiving, experiencing, or activity, the liberated yogin actualizes the potential to live a fully integrated life in the world. I conclude here

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[61]   *YS* I.33; see n. 59 above.

[62]   Although the historical identity of Patañjali the Yoga master is not known, we are assuming that Patañjali was, as the tradition would have it, an enlightened Yoga adept.

that there is no reason why the liberated yogin cannot be portrayed as a vital, creative, thoughtful, empathetic, balanced, happy, and wise person. Having adopted an integrative orientation to life, the enlightened being can endeavor to transform, enrich, and ennoble the world. I am therefore suggesting that there is a rich affective, moral, and cognitive as well as spiritual potential inherent in the realization of *puruṣa*, the "aloneness" of the power of consciousness/seeing.

Yoga presupposes the integration of knowledge and activity; there can be no scission between theoria and praxis. The *Yoga-Sūtra* is a philosophical text where praxis is deemed to be essential. Without actual practice the theory that informs Yoga would have no authentic meaning. Yet without examination and reflection there would be no meaningful striving for liberation, no "goal," as it were, to set one's sight on. In an original, inspiring, and penetrating style, Patañjali bridges metaphysics and ethics, transcendence and immanence, and contributes to the Hindu fold a form of philosophical investigation that, to borrow J. Taber's descriptive phrase for another context, can properly be called a "transformative philosophy." That is to say, it is a philosophical perspective which "does not stand as an edifice isolated from experience; it exists only insofar as it is realized in experience."[63]

4. Conclusion

To conclude, it can be said that *puruṣa* indeed has some precedence over *prakṛti* in Patañjali's system, for *puruṣa* is what is ordinarily "missing" or concealed in human life and is ultimately the state of consciousness one must awaken to in Yoga. The liberated state of "aloneness" (*kaivalya*) need not denote either an ontological superiority of *puruṣa* or an exclusion of *prakṛti*. *Kaivalya* can be positively construed as an integration of both principles — an integration that, I have argued, is what is most important for Yoga. I have proposed that the *Yoga-Sūtra* does not uphold a "path" of liberation that ultimately renders *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* incapable of "co-operating" together. Rather, the *Yoga-Sūtra* seeks to "unite" these two principles without the presence of any defiled understanding, to bring

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63   J. Taber (1983). *Transformative Philosophy: A Study of Śaṅkara, Fichte and Heidegger* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press) p. 26.

them "together," properly aligning them in a state of balance, harmony, and a clarity of knowledge in the integrity of being and action.

Both morality and perception (cognition) are essential channels through which human consciousness, far from being negated or suppressed, is transformed and illuminated. Yoga combines discerning knowledge with an emotional, affective, and moral sensibility allowing for a participatory epistemology that incorporates the moral amplitude for empathic identification with the world, that is, with the objects or persons one seeks to understand. The enhanced perception gained through Yoga must be interwoven with Yoga's rich affective and moral dimensions to form a spirituality that does not become entangled in a web of antinominanism, but which retains the integrity and vitality to transform our lives and the lives of others in an effective manner. By upholding an integration of the moral and the mystical, Yoga supports a reconciliation of the prevalent tension within Hinduism between (1) spiritual engagement and self-identity within the world (*pravrtti*) and (2) spiritual disengagement from worldliness and self-identity that transcends the world (*nivrtti*). Yoga discerns and teaches a balance between these two apparently conflicting orientations.

This paper has attempted to counter the radically dualistic, isolationistic, and ontologically oriented interpretations of Yoga presented by many scholars — where the full potentialities of our human embodiment are constrained within a radical, rigid, dualistic metaphysical structure — and propose instead an open-ended, morally and epistemologically oriented hermeneutic that frees Yoga of the long-standing conception of spiritual isolation, disembodiment, self-denial, and world-negation and thus from its pessimistic image. Our interpretation does not impute that *kaivalya* denotes a final incommensurability between spirit and matter. While Patañjali can be understood as having adopted a provisional, practical, dualistic metaphysics, there is no proof that his system ends in duality.

As well as being one of the seminal texts on yogic technique and transformative/liberative approaches within Indian philosophy, Patañjali's *Yoga-Sūtra* has to this day remained one of the most influential spiritual guides in Hinduism. In addition to a large number of people within India, millions of Westerners are actively practicing some form of Yoga influenced by Patañjali's thought clearly

demonstrating Yoga's relevance for today as a discipline that can transcend cultural, religious, and philosophical barriers. The universal and universalizing potential of Yoga makes it one of India's finest contributions to our struggle for self-definition, moral integrity, and spiritual renewal today. The main purpose of this paper has been to consider a fresh approach in which to reexamine and reassess classical Yoga philosophy, and to help to articulate in a fuller way what I have elsewhere referred to as the integrity of the Yoga *Darśana*.[64] Thus, it is my hope that some of the suggestions presented here can function as a catalyst for bringing Patañjali's thought into a more fruitful dialogue and encounter with other religious and philosophical traditions both within and outside of India. And, indeed, the approach I have taken can readily move in new directions by addressing contemporary concerns, for example, of issues related to ecology and the overwhelming need today to recover mutually enhancing relations between human beings and the earth.

ABBREVIATIONS

BG   *Bhagavadgītā*
RM   *Rāja-Mārtaṇḍa* of Bhoja Rāja (ca eleventh century CE)
SK   *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā* of Īśvara Kṛṣṇa (ca fourth-fifth century CE)
TV   *Tattva-Vaiśāradī* of Vācaspati Miśra (ca ninth century CE)
YB   *Yoga- Bhāṣya* of Vyāsa (ca fifth-sixth century CE)
YS   *Yoga-Sūtra* of Patañjali (ca second-third century CE)
YSS   *Yoga-Sāra-Saṃgraha* of Vijñāna Bhikṣu (ca sixteenth century CE)
YV   *Yoga-Vārttika* of Vijñāna Bhikṣu (ca sixteenth century CE)

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64   See Whicher (1998).